





THE EARLY ITALIAN PRINTS IN THE
BRITISH MUSEUM





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INTRODUCTION TO A CATALOGUE
OF THE EARLY ITALIAN PRINTS IN
THE BRITISH MUSEUM BY
RICHARD FISHER



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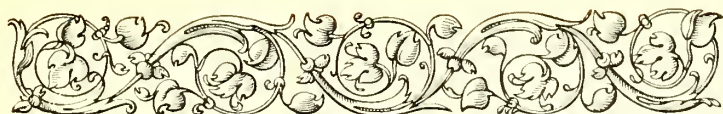


THE following Essay by Mr. Fisher, whose authority on the subject is well known, is printed by the Trustees as an Introduction to the study of the unrivalled collection of engravings by the masters of the Early Italian Schools, which is preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum.

An official catalogue of the collection, based also in great part on the labours of Mr. Fisher, is in preparation.

SIDNEY COLVIN.



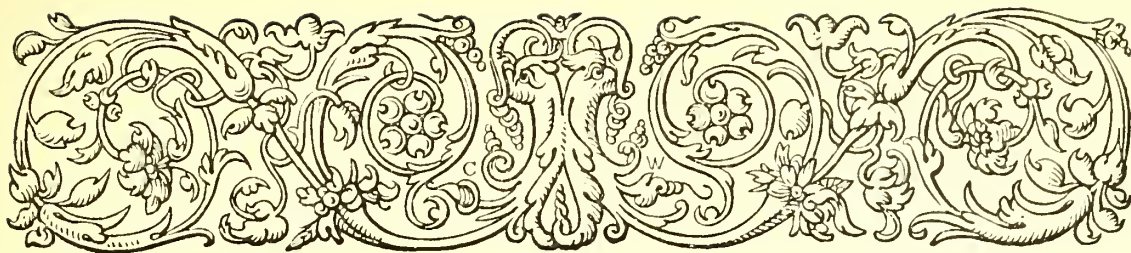


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EARLY ITALIAN PRINTS.

CHAPTER I.

NIELLI.



THE origin of engraving in Italy—of the process of obtaining impressions upon paper from metal plates incised with designs upon them, to which impressions the designation of engravings was given,—had long baffled the inquiries of the writers who devoted themselves to the investigation. The recognition of the earliest known example of the application of the process, which was first resorted to by the goldsmiths of Florence, as a test of the progress of their work upon the plates they were engaged in chasing for the infusion of niello, was made in 1797 by the Abbé Zani, the curator of the museum at Parma, who had always contended that Italy held precedence of Germany with respect to the discovery of the art of engraving. He was examining the portfolios in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris, when he noticed a print corresponding in subject with the well-known niellated pax of the Coronation of the Virgin belonging to the church of San Giovanni in Florence, of the workmanship, as by very general repute it was considered to be, of the celebrated goldsmith, Tommaso Finiguerra. The researches the Abbé proceeded to make resulted in his establishing the fact, that from the pax itself,

previous to its having been niellated, an imprint upon paper had been obtained. Duchesne, in his "*Essai sur les Nielles*," 8vo, Paris, 1826 (p. 56), gives an account of the Abbé's excitement on realizing the confirmation of his opinion. Volumes of dissertation and conjecture have been written upon the subject. The final operation of finishing the pax, by the infusion of the niello, precluded the possibility of the plate having been printed from subsequent to such infusion, and the simple fact, relieved of all controversy, remains, that an impression upon paper from the plate of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin at Florence, was taken by the engraver as a trial proof of the progress of his work, prior to its completion. This trial proof, first brought into notice by the Abbé Zani in 1797, no other example of it being known, is one of the principal treasures of the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris.

The chasing gold and silver in every variety of subject for the insertion of a black metallic compound of silver, copper, lead, sulphur, and borax, known by the name of niello, which, reduced to a state of fusion from heat, became, on its cooling, firmly indurated in the hollows prepared to receive it, had been practised by the artificers in metal, for the ornamentation of gold and silver plate for ecclesiastical and domestic use, from a very early period.

Passavant, in his "*Peintre-Graveur*" (i., 261), describes all the known specimens of such workmanship which have been preserved, and quotes an extract from Ducange's "*Glossarium*" (folio, Paris, 1723), where, in the life of King Robert of Helgaud, mention is made of Leodebode, Abbot of St. Aignan of Orleans, having, so early as the seventh century, bequeathed to his monastery two small gilt cups of Marseilles manufacture, with niellated crosses in the centre ("*scutellas II minores massilienses deauratas quæ habent in medio cruces niellatas*").¹

¹ See Duchesne, "*Essai sur les Nielles*," page 94.

The particulars of the different ingredients employed, and the careful operation needed for their amalgamation, are explained by Benvenuto Cellini in his "*Trattato dell' Oreficeria*," published in 1569, and a clear exposition of the method of their application is given in the "*Partie Historique*" (p. 35), comprised in Duchesne's "*Essai sur les nielles*."

Vasari,¹ in his *Lives of the Painters* (v., 395), states that "the origin of copper-plate engraving was derived from Maso Finiguerra, a Florentine, about the year of our Salvation 1460; for he took impressions in clay of all the things which he engraved in silver for the purpose of completing them in niello, and having poured over them liquid sulphur, they became marked and filled with smoke; whence, being rubbed with oil, they showed the same as the silver: and this he again did with damped paper, and with the same tint, pressing over it with a round roller, smooth in every part; which not only made them appear printed, but they came as if drawn with a pen."²

And in his *Life of Antonio and Piero del Pollajuolo* Vasari writes (iii., 287):—"There was also, in this same time, another goldsmith named Maso Finiguerra, who had an extraordinary and well-deserved reputation. He had not his equal in the skill of handling the burin, and in making nielli, in bringing such numbers of figures together in small or large spaces, as we see in certain paxes of his

¹ The references to Vasari are to the edition in eight volumes, 8vo, Firenze, 1878-1882, "*Le Opere di Giorgio Vasari con nuove annotazioni e commenti*, di Gaetano Milanesi."

² "Il principio dunque dell' intagliare le stampe venne da Maso Finiguerra fiorentino circa gli anni di nostra salute 1460; perchè costui tutte le cose che intagliò in argento per empierle di niello, le improntò con terra; e gittatovi sopra solfo liquefatto, vennero improntate e ripiene di fumo; onde a olio mostravano il medesimo che l' argento: e ciò fece ancora con carta umida e con la medesima tinta, aggravandovi sopra un rullo tondo, ma piano per tutto; il che non solo le faceva apparire stam-pate, ma venivano come disegnate di penna."

workmanship, in San Giovanni of Florence, with very minute histories of the Passion of Christ."

Vasari, who thus mentions Finiguerra's skill in his trade with such high commendation, had started in life by pursuing the same vocation.

In the "*Racconti del Cellini, pubblicati nel 1828 dall'erudito Sig. Bartholomeo Gamba, estratti dal Trattato dell'orificeria del Cellini che serbasi manoscritto nella Marciana in Venezia,*" which are again published in the *Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, by Tassi, Firenze, 1829, we have the statement, in the words of Cellini:—"The fame of Maso Finiguerra had already spread throughout the world, who engraved nielli so admirably. One sees a pax by his hand, representing Christ on the Cross between the two thieves, with many ornaments of horses and other things. It was engraved and niellated by the hand of our Finiguerra, after the design of Antonio Pollajuolo. It is in silver, and is to be seen in our beautiful church of San Giovanni at Florence."

Cav. Milanesi, the learned editor of Vasari, contributed an account of "*Les Nielles de Tommaso Finiguerra et de Dei*" to the French periodical "*L'Art*," published in the numbers for the 25th March, 1883, and the 15th February, 1884. The discussion of the subject was continued by M. Dutuit, on the 1st March following, in the same periodical, in an article entitled "*Une des plus anciennes gravures connues avec date.*"

According to Cav. Milanesi, Tommaso Finiguerra¹ was born in the year 1426. "We learn the date of his birth from a declaration made in 1427 by the goldsmith Antonio, his father, stating his son's age to be one year and five months. Maso passed his infancy with Antonio, and served

¹ His father resided in the small street called the *Vaccherecchia*, near the *Loggia de' Lanzi*, in which street also lived and worked the brothers Pollajuolo.

his apprenticeship under his guidance. So soon as he had acquired sufficient technical skill, he joined Pietro di Bartolommeo Sali, who kept a goldsmith's shop much resorted to, where a considerable trade was carried on; Antonio del Pollajuolo, who subsequently became associated with Pietro, had likewise entered the same workshop. Their community of employment under the same master naturally occasioned a close friendship between Maso and Antonio, ending only on the premature death of the first of them." The declaration made by the father is quoted by Gaye in his "*Carteggio inedito d'Artisti*," Firenze, 1839 (i., 113), as being preserved in the archives of Florence, and he adds in a note that the father's nuncupative will is recorded under the date of the 13th December, 1464, in which it is named that his son Tommaso was then dead.¹

Tommaso Finiguerra received a commission from the guild of merchants of Calimala in Florence, to execute for the church of San Giovanni a pax in silver gilt, enamelled and niellated; the record of the payment for it, of sixty-six golden florins, on delivery, was entered in 1452, in the register of the *Arte de' Mercatanti*, under signature A A, as follows: "*Pace d'argento, dorata, smaltata, e nielata di peso di d. 55. d. 11. si fa p la Chiesa di S. Gio. p. Tom^{so} di finiguerra Orafo e se gli paga a ragione di f. 1. largo dell' oncia 200 costo in tutto f. 66. 71. 5—d 6.*" The original register has been lost, but early in the sixteenth century, extracts, which are still preserved amongst the archives of the city, were made from it by Carlo Strozzi, and from them the preceding quotation is taken.²

¹ "In omnibus autem suis bonis instituit Franciscum et Stefanum ejus filios legitimos, et Pierantonium ejus nepotem, natum ex Tommasio ejus filio premortuo."

² M. Dutuit in his *Essay in "L'Art"* (p. 85) publishes the account of a communication his brother received from Cav. Pini, keeper in the National Museum:—"The Senator Strozzi, who lived in the early part of the seventeenth century, made an abstract of the registers: the result of

Cav. Gaburri, who was in much repute at the commencement of the last century for his critical knowledge, made diligent inquiry in 1732 respecting nielli and the workers of them, with the view of describing the early history of copperplate engraving; he was assisted by Antonio Francesco Gori, the author of the "*Thesaurus Veterum Diptychorum*" (folio, Florence, 1759), who was acquainted with all the art treasures of Florence. In a letter to Pierre Jean Mariette, written from Florence, dated October, 1732, which is quoted from the "*Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura*," by Ottley (296), Gaburri writes: "I have rummaged all Florence, hoping to have the good fortune to discover at least one print bearing the name or the cypher of Finiguerra. But after having in vain searched the museums of the Gaddi, the Niccolini, the Giral-di, and Covoni families, besides many other smaller collections belonging to private persons, I have at last given the matter up in despair, and all that I have been able to do, has been to get a drawing made for you of one of the two paxes which exist in our most ancient church of S. Giovanni Battista;" adding, "they are not, however, both of them the work of Maso Finiguerra, one of them having been made by Matteo di Giovanni Dei, who was also a goldsmith; which latter I do not send you, but only the other, which alone is by the said Finiguerra."

In the same register of the *Arte de' Mercatanti*, there was the following further entry under signature B, and the date 1455: "Pace si da a fare p la Chiesa di S. Gio. a Mattio di Gio. Dei Orafo e se gli paga f 28 p intaglio niello doratura e smalto, e costo in tutto con l'Argento f 68. 6 . 1 . 2 . 213."

his dealing with them was that they were mislaid, and have not since been found. It is incorrect (he added) that Gori, who lived a century after Strozzi, could have examined the original books of the consuls of Calimala or of the merchants, because in his day the books were lost: he could therefore have seen only the notes and the abstract made by the Senator Strozzi."

In the “*Thesaurus Veterum Diptychorum*” of Gori,¹ who in 1717 was nominated a member of the clergy, and elected prior of the Baptistery of San Giovanni in 1746, the following account of the two paxes is given : “ There are exhibited two silver plaques, used as paxes ; their weight is about 20 livres ; they are ornamented with silver-gilt figures of very beautiful workmanship, and silver handles are at the back : the one, engraved and painted in monochrome with niello, was executed with incredible care and skill by the celebrated Tommaso, the son of Finiguerra. I take advantage of the opportunity to expatiate upon the subject, as the pax is so much the more remarkable, from its having given birth to the admirable art of engraving with the burin upon plates of copper. The talented goldsmith engraved, on a silver plate, figures representing the Triumph and Coronation of the blessed Virgin Mary, raised to heaven surrounded by angels, and a great number of Saints, arranged in the front of the composition. Before his work was finished and charged with the black coating called niello, it chanced that he desired to take an imprint, using plaster and sulphur, of which I have an example in an old tabernacle of the time, using colouring matter obtained from the greasy smoke of a candle. He wished also to try what the engraved figures would produce in pressing a damp paper over them. So soon, then, as he saw that the paper applied to the plate rendered correctly the subject traced upon it, he was the first to arrive by the proceeding at the knowledge of the art of engraving on copper, and to take from it proofs on paper, with some colour mixed with oil.” Further on, Gori added, “ Another pax, enriched with damascened work, represented in the centre a crucifixion of Jesus Christ, with a great number of figures engraved on a small silver plate, covered with a black pigment called niello. It was made by Matteo, the son of

¹ Antonio Francesco Gori was born in Florence on the 9th December, 1691, where he died on the 20th January, 1757.

Giovanni Dei, a citizen and very skilful goldsmith of Florence. He added many beautiful ornaments, receiving for his work when finished and delivered, in 1455, 68 florins of gold, in consideration of the expense."

We have no evidence, antecedent to this account of the prior of the Baptistery, beyond what is to be gathered from the earlier writers we have quoted, in support of the generally accepted ascription to Maso Finiguerra of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin. On a throne, elaborately ornamented, the Virgin, with her hands folded across her breast, is seated, at the left, inclining towards the Saviour, seated on the opposite side, who is engaged in placing the crown on her head; angels are at the sides, and a scroll is borne by cherubim above, inscribed: "ASSVMPTA . EST . MARIA . INCELV . GAVDET . EXERCITVS . ANGELORVM:" an assemblage of saints is grouped at the sides and before the throne. A photograph of the pax is in the Print Room of the British Museum. The inspiration of the composition Cav. Milanese considers was derived more from Fra Filippo Lippi than any other artist of the time. It is one of two paxes, formerly belonging to the *Opera* of the church of San Giovanni in Florence, which some few years since were transferred to the National Museum; they are both mounted in large silver frames of seventeenth century workmanship, rude and inappropriate in design.

The second pax, of the Crucifixion (Adoration of the Cross), previously referred to in the extract from Gori's Thesaurus, represents the Saviour on the Cross, upraised in the centre of the composition, unaccompanied by the crucified thieves; eight angels are arranged about the cross, in the air above, and at the sides of it: the Virgin and her attendants are on the ground in front, and groups of saints and worshippers are assembled in the scene, noticeable amongst them being S. John the Baptist and S. Mark, with S. Jerome kneeling before them, on the right, and S. Mary Magdalene clinging to the Cross, and S. Martha, on

the left. A photograph of the pax is in the Print Room of the British Museum. This second pax, since the days of Vasari, has been regarded as the one executed by Matteo Dei for the church of San Giovanni: it is of inferior workmanship, and the absence of horses and of the crucified thieves negatives any claim to its being the pax of the Crucifixion by Finiguerra mentioned by Cellini.

In recent years doubts have been expressed respecting the correctness of the attribution of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin to Finiguerra. The first writer who raised the question was Baron von Rumohr, in "Untersuchung der Gründe für die Annahme: dass Maso di Finiguerra Erfinder des Handgriffes sei, gestochene Metallplatten auf genetztes Papier abzudrucken," 8vo, Leipzig, 1841, wherein he attempted to demonstrate that the pax of the Coronation was not by Finiguerra, but far more probably by Matteo Dei. No document or tradition is adduced in support of his argument, but he advances the hypothesis, that the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin was the work of Matteo Dei, simply from the circumstance, that neither in the record of the commission given to Finiguerra, nor of the payment made to him, mention is made of the subject of the work he was employed to execute, and that it is only by later writers the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin has been ascribed to him. Cav. Milanese and M. Dutuit, in their essays in the French periodical "L'Art," previously mentioned, concur in the opinions of Baron von Rumohr. Their arguments are too voluminous to be quoted *in extenso*, and must be read, to arrive at the full understanding of their theories for the ascription of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin to Matteo Dei. The contrary inference raised by them, that the subject of the pax Finiguerra received payment for in 1452 was a Crucifixion, is based upon the words of Cellini, that "the fame of Maso Finiguerra had already spread throughout the world, who engraved nielli so admirably. One sees a pax by his hand, representing

Christ on the Cross between the two thieves, with many ornaments of horses and other things :” and upon the remark of Vasari relating to “certain paxes of his (Finiguerra’s) workmanship in San Giovanni of Florence, with very minute histories of the Passion of Christ.”

Cav. Milanesi writes (p. 66) : “We know, from the published documents, that in 1452 a pax was ordered from Maso Finiguerra for the church (of San Giovanni), and that in 1455 Matteo Dei was likewise commissioned to execute another pax. But these documents, explicit with respect to the weight of the paxes, and the sums paid to the artists, are altogether silent as to the subjects of them, which would be to us of far greater importance. Benvenuto Cellini and Vasari supply, to a certain extent, this deficiency. The first in the preface to his ‘*Trattato dell’ Oreficeria*’ says that at San Giovanni there was a pax executed by Finiguerra, on which was represented Christ on the Cross between the two thieves, with men on horseback and a numerous crowd at the foot of the Cross. The second, in the introduction to his *Lives of the Painters* tells us Finiguerra made admirable nielli, ‘of which we have the proof in some paxes of the church of San Giovanni, at Florence, which pass for marvellous works.’ The same Vasari, in the Life of Antonio del Pollajuolo, remarks still more specifically that in San Giovanni certain paxes due to Maso are to be seen ‘with fine representations of the Passion of Christ’.”

The pax, by Maso Finiguerra, of “Christ on the Cross between the two thieves,” which Cellini wrote about, and the paxes made by him “with very minute histories of the Passion of Christ” named by Vasari, shared most probably the fate which befel so many of the treasures of Florence, early in the sixteenth century, for all trace of them has been lost, and we must assume they perished, or were placed in concealment, during the troubles in the city, early in the sixteenth century, which Sismondi gives an account of. M. Dutuit (p. 86) extracts the follow-

ing passage from Sismondi's Italian Republics (Paris, 1840, vol. x., c. iii.) :—"In 1529 Florence having to sustain a very hazardous war to preserve her liberty, forced levies were on several occasions exacted from those named by the commissioners, as the fifty, the hundred, the two hundred wealthiest citizens of the Republic. All the silver plate of the churches, as well as that of private individuals, was taken to the Mint. The precious stones which ornamented the relics were put into pledge. A third of the church possessions, and the real estates of the corporations of the arts and trades, and the goods of the recusants, were at the same time sold." And M. Dutuit supplements the account in Sismondi by a quotation (p. 83) from a pamphlet of Count Cicognara, "*Dell' Origine, composizione, decomposizione ed esercitazione dell' arte dei nielli*" :—"It is lamentable to arrive at the conviction of the loss of so many precious things. One cannot doubt that the pax referred to by Cellini (a connoisseur of consummate knowledge) was the work of Maso Finiguerra. We have in vain sought for it in Florence. It was perhaps lost in 1527, when the pieces of plate of the church of San Giovanni were handed over to the Republic, to be coined into money during the siege of the city, as Gori mentions. We believe it shared the fate of so many other precious works which were broken up and melted."

Admitting that there is no specific authority to support the ascription, which has so long been accepted, of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin to Maso Finiguerra, we are equally without any evidence corroborative of its attempted identification with the pax Matteo Dei made for the church of San Giovanni in 1455.

In the silver pax of the Coronation of the Virgin at Florence, with the sulphur cast from it belonging to Baron Edmond de Rothschild, the print on paper in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris, and the second sulphur cast in the British Museum, taken immediately preceding the infusion

of the niello, we have the record of the history of the transition from the tedious operation by the Florentine goldsmith for testing his work by sulphur casts, which was in use at the time, to the discovery of the far more easy and simple method of taking imprints of it upon paper. No document, however, has yet been discovered whereby the date of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin, whether of 1452 or 1455, or the authorship of it, whether of Maso Finiguerra or Matteo Dei, have been affirmatively established : there is only the strong presumption, entertained since the days of Vasari, who was fully competent to pronounce an opinion upon it, that the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin, admittedly the most beautiful work of the kind which has come down to us, was one of the paxes executed by Finiguerra, who was pre-eminent amongst his contemporaries for his skill in their craft, and nothing has been adduced to disprove the long-accepted designation of it as of his workmanship.

No other silver plate, of which likewise a cast in sulphur and a print upon paper from it has been preserved, is known. The record exists of one other plate, of an Enthronement of the Virgin, which has been lost, in a sulphur cast in the British Museum,¹ and in a print upon paper in the collection of the Archduke Charles at Vienna, both taken from the same plate, prior to its having been niellated, contemporary in point of time, and nearly equal in artistic merit, with the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin.

The two prints upon paper, the one in the Cabinet

¹ The cast was acquired by Messrs. Woodburn in one of their Continental journeys, and after passing through the hands of certain English owners, was secured for the British Museum. The unique impression upon paper from the plate was in the Borduge Collection at the commencement of the last century : eventually it passed into the possession of Etienne Durand, of Paris, at one of whose sales, in 1819-21, several of the rare prints in the Albertina were acquired, the print from the pax of the Enthroned Madonna amongst them, for which 3,500 francs were paid.

des Estampes at Paris, and the other in the collection of the Archduke Charles at Vienna, from paxes of which the sulphur casts have come down to us, are the earliest known specimens of the adoption by the Italian goldsmiths of the process that had been discovered, of procuring trial prints upon paper for testing their work, in the place of the casts they previously had been in the habit of making.

Any arguments that can be adduced in the attempted identification of the two paxes of the Coronation of the Virgin and the Adoration of the Cross, formerly in San Giovanni, and now in the National Museum, at Florence, from their weights, are, unfortunately, totally valueless, owing to the fate that befel them. The recorded weight of 55 ounces 11 danari, of the pax made in 1452 by Finiguerra for San Giovanni, was evidently of its completed state, with the requisite silver mounting, and the handle at the back for its use at the altar: the weight of the pax made by Matteo Dei is not stated. We have, therefore, no information of the separate weights of either of the niellated plaques at the time of their completion and delivery.

M. Dutuit (p. 85) writes: "We have had the pax attributed to Maso Finiguerra carefully weighed: it weighs, firstly, the niellated plaque, 107 gr.; secondly, the silver-gilt mounting surrounding it, 1 kilog., 73 gr.;—the two together, 1 kilog., 180 gr., which reduced into Florentine ounces gives a total of 41 ounces, 16 deniers, 23 grains and a fraction."

The present condition of the two paxes affords the proof that during the troubles in Florence in 1529, or at some other period of need, the plaques were prudently removed from their frames, which were abandoned to the melting-pot; and that in after years they were again mounted, in the coarse heavy setting of seventeenth century workmanship they are now disfigured with.

Some few niellated plates escaped the destruction that took place, and passed into private hands. The following

five examples were acquired by the Florentine Government, and added to the paxes of the Coronation of the Virgin and the Adoration of the Cross, previously described: they consist of two Crucifixions; the Conversion of S. Paul, not niellated; the Virgin Enthroned, with SS. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist standing on either side; and a small circular medallion of Francesco Sforza on horseback.

The two paxes of the Crucifixion are of very great excellence, and from the prominent position of the horses introduced in one of them, it might be the pax which Benvenuto Cellini, in his "*Trattato del l' Oreficeria*," refers to as "a pax, representing Christ on the cross, between the two thieves, with many ornaments of horses and other things." This pax of the Crucifixion, in delicate drawing and quality of execution, is unsurpassed by any specimen extant of the exercise of the goldsmith's skill in engraving. Two angels are above the Saviour's cross, and two by the side of it; one of them, on the left, holding a chalice, receives the blood from the wound in the Saviour's side. Near the margin, on the left, an angel with clasped hands is close to the cross of the penitent thief, and a devil at the shoulder of the impenitent thief, on the right, clutches him by the hair. A mounted soldier, the back of whose horse is turned to the front, is on the right, and the centurion, with his horse half seen in profile, is on the left. The fainting Virgin is upheld in the arms of her two attendants, who stand at the foot of the Saviour's cross, and on the ground, in front on the left, three soldiers are seated casting lots for the Saviour's coat. Cav. Milanesi considered the workmanship of the pax to be quite equal in merit to that of the Coronation of the Virgin, and conjectured it might be the same pax which Cellini spoke of as the work of Finiguerra. Vincenzo Gotti, a dealer in works of art, acquired this pax of the Crucifixion during the troubles in Italy at the end of the last century, and in 1794 it was purchased from him for the Florentine Government.

The second pax of the Crucifixion,¹ wherein several horses are likewise introduced, closely corresponds, in its general effect, both in drawing and treatment, with the style of Antonio del Pollajuolo; an angel is on either side of the crucified Saviour; a third is by the penitent thief, on the left, and a devil is at the back of the impenitent thief, on the right. The Virgin is on the ground in front, sustained in the arms of two of her kneeling attendants, a third with clasped hands being in the rear of the group: the soldiers drawing lots for the Saviour's coat stand on the right. This pax Cav. Milanesi informs us ("L'Art," p. 223) was, in 1801, transferred from the Uffizi to the National Museum.

The plate of the Conversion of S. Paul (Duchesne, 139) is a bright, clear specimen of engraving, mounted in a plain wooden frame; it was acquired in 1801 by the Florentine Government, on the dispersion of a religious fraternity of S. Paul in Florence. The plate, not having been niellated, was capable of being printed from, and Antonio Francesco Gori caused fifty impressions to be taken from it, according to Passavant (i., 278, 139), of which one is in the British Museum collection.

The small pax of the Virgin enthroned Cav. Milanesi states ("L'Art," p. 223) was purchased in 1801 by the Florentine Government, of Gaetano Gaglier, an artist and dealer in curiosities at Florence.

No record appears to have been preserved of the source whence the small circular medallion of Francesco Sforza on horseback was acquired.

Permission was obtained in 1883 from the Italian Government, for photographs to be taken from the nielli in

¹ Cav. Milanesi ("L'Art," p. 67) considers this second pax betrays a German influence, and that the composition, as well as the design, are copied or imitated from some print of an ancient German engraver, the view of Jerusalem at the back being, in his opinion, taken from some German city.

the National Museum, which was done for me by Signor Fineschi, of Florence, and I was enabled to add the prints from the negatives of the seven plates to the collection in the British Museum.

Two silver paxes held in much repute at Bologna, the subjects of them being an Adoration of the Cross, and Our Saviour's Resurrection, are preserved in the Accademia of the city; the latter especially fully justifies the opinion that it is by the hand of Francesco Francia, to whom they are both attributed; in the subsequent account of Francia (p. 408) descriptions of them are given.

The names of more than two hundred goldsmiths are stated to have been enrolled, during the latter part of the fifteenth century, in the archives of Florence, as practising their calling in the city, although scarcely a record of their works remains. Duchesne, in the fourth chapter of the *Partie Historique* of his "Essai," which was written to establish the personality of the then newly discovered niellateur "Peregrini," gives a long list of distinguished *orfèvres nielleurs*, of whose productions no particulars are extant, with the remark that "we learn only they were held in esteem by their contemporaries, and were employed in executing numerous niellated objects for divers churches." Some rare specimens of their production are in the public and private collections in Europe; but a large proportion of the examples of niellated workmanship still in existence have been magnified into importance by the fictitious accounts compiled of the early dates of their execution: they are, for the most part, notwithstanding the long attributed pedigrees of their ownership, of nineteenth century manufacture, of Venetian fabrication.

The British Museum possesses several specimens of niellated plates, many from reliquaries and ecclesiastical vessels and book covers: one important piece is a pax of the Virgin and Child, with attendant Saints (Duchesne,

No. 55), which, having been bought in 1818 by Messrs. Woodburn from Giuseppe Storck, of Milan, was sold by them to Sir Mark Masterman Sykes, and was subsequently acquired for the National collection.





CHAPTER II.

NIELLI.

SULPHUR CASTS.

PRIOR to the discovery of the method for examining the advance made in his work, by taking imprints of it upon paper, the Florence goldsmith, as previously named, was dependent upon the sulphur cast he procured from his plate for guidance. The account given by Vasari has already been quoted; but Lanzi, in his "*Storia Pittorica della Italia*," vol. i., p. 75, so succinctly explains the process, that we add his description:—"The Florentine goldsmith, before filling with niello the plate he had chased, took a cast of his work in fine clay, the subject represented in his engraving becoming reproduced by the mould, in relief, in a reversed direction. He covered this mould with liquid sulphur, and thus obtained a second proof, wherein the composition, restored to its original direction, was indented in hollowed-out lines, the same as in the engraved plate. He then spread over the sulphur a layer of oil mixed with lamp-black, so as to fill up with it the cuttings or cavities, which were to represent the design in black, and he carefully cleaned the flat surface which he wished to keep white. The last operation consisted in coating the sulphur with a layer of fine oil, to give it the polish and appearance of a silver plate."

Twenty-five of these sulphur casts are still in existence : the most important are the two, taken at different stages of the work, from the plate of the Florence pax of the Coronation of the Virgin. One of them belonged to Count Seratti, who, at the commencement of the present century, was governor of Leghorn. He had accompanied King Ferdinand to Palermo, in his flight from Naples, on the invasion of the French in 1806, carrying his art treasures with him. Some few years later the vessel, in which he was returning with them to Leghorn, was captured by pirates, and the Count was conveyed prisoner to Algiers, where he died in 1811. The sulphur cast, with other of the Count's possessions, was disposed of at Malta, whence it was conveyed to London, and was purchased by Messrs. Colnaghi, who sold it to the Duke of Buckingham ; after some changes of ownership it passed to the British Museum.

The second sulphur, somewhat injured, moulded from the same plate in an earlier state of its cutting, belonged to Antonio Francesco Gori, and was acquired by Count Jacopo Durazzo of Genoa. On the sale of the Count's collections at Stuttgart in 1872, by the then representatives of the family, it was bought by Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris.

The sulphur next in importance is that of the Enthronement of the Virgin in the British Museum previously mentioned, an impression on paper from the plate of it being in the collection of the Archduke Charles at Vienna. With the exception of one other small cast, also in the British Museum, the subject of it being three monks seated in a wood, the remaining twenty-one sulphurs, consisting of seven of Old Testament History, and fourteen of New Testament History, all of small size, formed the decoration of a portable altar, belonging to a branch house of the great convent of the Camaldoli¹ in the mountains adjacent to

¹ Camalduli—Campo-malduli,—from Count Malduli having presented the ground (campo) for the monastery.

Florence. These twenty-one sulphurs are mentioned by Lanzi in his "*Storia Pittorica*." Messrs. Woodburn of London obtained them about 1818 from Giuseppe Storck, by whom they had been purchased; having been sold by Messrs. Woodburn to Sir Mark Masterman Sykes, they were dispersed, subsequent to his death, at the sale of his collection in 1824. After sundry changes of ownership, the first series of seven, and nine of the fourteen the second series consisted of, passed to the British Museum; the remaining five of this second series were bought at the Sykes' sale by a dealer in London, and are now the property of Baron Edmond de Rothschild.

The accidental placing of one of his plates upon damped linen, or more probably upon a moistened sheet of paper, may have attracted the engraver's attention to the mark that was left, and enlightened him as to the means of procuring an imprint from it. Various explanations, all of them conjectural, have been attempted to account for the initiation of the process. There are dissertations upon the subject in Ottley's "*Inquiry into the Origin and Early History of Engraving*" (4to, London, 1816, p. 266), and by Duchesne at the commencement of the third chapter of the *Partie Historique* of his "*Essai*" previously mentioned.

Vasari's account has already been given; Duchesne's amplified description (p. 42), "*Personne n'ignore ce que raconte Vasari*," is taken, not from Vasari, but from the following imaginative passage in Huber's "*Manuel des Curieux et des Amateurs de l'Art*" (Turin, 1800): "*On donne encore une autre origine à cette découverte. On prétend qu'une blanchisseuse posa par hazard du linge humide sur de la vaisselle gravée et préparée comme on vient de dire; que le linge, par son poids, fit l'office d'une presse, et qu'en le relevant on trouva sur la partie qui avoit touché la gravure une empreinte semblable à un dessin à la plume*" (Tome iii., p. 4).

Amongst other controverted points relating to the ques-

tion, is one as to the impression upon paper of the Coronation of the Virgin in the Cabinet des Estampes — whether, instead of direct from the plate, it was not impressed from a sulphur cast the goldsmith had taken from it. Bartsch, in the preface to the thirteenth volume of his “*Peintre Graveur*,” with the manifest effort to discredit, as far as practicable, the importance in point of date of the Abbé Zani’s discovery, narrates his explanation of the circumstances, with the opinion that from the application of damped paper, to clean the surface of the sulphur cast that had been taken, the print was accidentally obtained. Passavant, in his “*Peintre Graveur*” (vol. i., p. 193, and elsewhere), devotes much research to the inquiry, resulting in his sustaining the conclusion, arrived at by Duchesne in his *Essai sur les Nielles*, that from the plate itself the impression was printed.

Cav. Milanesi, in his contribution previously mentioned to the French periodical “*L’Art*” (p. 71), refers to Vasari’s statement, in his life of Marcantonio, of “the means employed by Finiguerra to procure from his plates engraved with the burin imprints in clay, in sulphur, and on paper, which lead us to the belief that this Florentine goldsmith was the first to employ this technical process. During two centuries all the writers have entertained no other opinion. Proof and confirmation were found by them in the two sulphur casts, and the print on paper, of the Coronation of the Virgin, a work down to the present day attributed to Finiguerra. The subject was discussed, to ascertain if the print on paper was obtained through the means of the sulphur cast or the metal plate. Baldinucci, Bartsch, and others support the first alternative; and on this point I agree with them, because the words of Vasari will bear no other construction. Zani, Ottley, and Duchesne support the last alternative.”

M. Dutuit, in his essay in the same periodical (p. 87), discusses the matter more in detail, and proceeds: “We

will now pass to the examination of the plate of the Coronation of the Virgin, exhibited in the Museum of the Uffizi, and the print in the National Library (at Paris). Besides the plate at Florence, two sulphurs of it, and the print, the object of our inquiry, are known. One of the sulphurs is from the plate, when but a slight sketch, the background not being covered with crossed lines, except only in the upper part; the other sulphur shows the whole of the work which is on the silver plate. The first passed from the Durazzo collection to that of M. de Rothschild; the second, after having belonged to the Marquis Seratti and the Duke of Buckingham, is now in the British Museum. The print, on the contrary, was taken apparently from an intermediate state. On comparing it with the plate in the Museum of the Uffizi numerous differences, some only apparent, but others actually existing, present themselves; the print wants much of the work, but it shows also other work which is not in the plate. We have, however, to consider the matter very carefully, and not to be discouraged, without a thorough examination, by the differences we observe. The comparison is not an easy one. The print is buried in a heavy frame, very inconvenient to handle, and the glass over it causes a deceptive reflection.

“The general aspect of the print is that of a delicate silvery vignette : the lines are slight, and, as it were, dotted. It forms a contrast with the photograph, of which the outlines and the cutting are much more vigorous and accented, which is explained by the fact that one is a sketch more or less advanced, and the other a plate completely finished.

“The first difference we are struck with is in the inscription, in reverse, on the plate and the two sulphurs, ‘GAVDET EXERCITVS’. In the print, according to Bartsch, it is ‘AVI,’ according to Duchesne, ‘AVE,’ instead of ‘GAVDET.’ In the engraving, made by Pauquet for the book of the

Abbé Zani, it is 'AVI,' and in that by Girardet, in the 'Essai sur les Nielles,' it is 'AVE.' This point is so important that it seems Zani, Bartsch, and Duchesne ought at once to have stopped to consider it, but they gave no thought to the matter. We at first supposed that in place of 'AVI' or 'AVE' there should be 'GAVDET.' Although we have been unable to re-establish the word, even by the aid of a magnifying glass, we fancied we could perceive, at the commencement, the traces of a 'G,' and, after the three visible letters 'AVE,' the traces of an 'N' and a small 'T' at the end, where it touches the 'E' of 'EXERCITVS.' Then, in looking at the print very attentively, we do not see the double cross on the crown of the Virgin, nor the jewel which is on the forehead of Christ. These imperceptible ornaments become visible by the aid of a double magnifying glass. The Cross, in the middle of the scroll on the crosier held by St. Augustin, is not visible to the naked eye, but by the aid of a magnifying glass one at last discovers it."

After enumerating various minute points of difference, M. Dutuit remarks : " Under any other circumstances we should naturally be led to discuss the question, to ascertain if the print in the National Library was taken from an engraved plate, or from a sulphur. According to the terms employed by Vasari, the result seems to be that from a sulphur Maso Finiguerra obtained his prints. To deprive the expressions of Vasari of this meaning, we must put a stop, where there is a stop and a comma, and change a small into a capital letter. Baldinucci, a learned writer, born at Florence about 1624, states positively in his 'Notizie de' Professori di disegno' (tom. iv., pp. 3-4), 'when Finiguerra had engraved any subject on silver to be covered with niello, he was accustomed to take from it a mould in clay, on which he poured melted sulphur; he thus obtained an imprint of his work. Filling then the hollows of this imprint with some colouring matter mixed with oil, he put over it a moistened paper, and, by the pressure of a wooden

roller, he obtained a proof, similar to that the silver plate had given ; and these impressions on paper had the appearance of pen-drawings.' ”

M. Dutuit proceeds to give an extract from Cicognara's work “*Dell' Origine, composizione, decomposizione, ed esercitazione dell' arte dei nielli,*”¹ of a letter of Professor Vitali of Parma, to the librarian Angelo Pezzana : “ I have in my possession the celebrated drawing of the pax of Maso Finiguerra, which belonged to Mariette, whereon something in his own handwriting is written. The design is invaluable to me, in its serving to prove, in a wonderful manner, that the print at Paris, of which Zani gave a fac simile, is not true, and cannot come from the original pax, as I have demonstrated in the third part of my ‘*Ragionamenti,*’² which are not yet edited.”

M. Dutuit concludes his remarks with an “urgent appeal for a thorough investigation, which will leave no doubts, and bring to light the truth of an affair which, we repeat, has been judged, we will not say with great levity, but at any rate with too much precipitation.”

The arguments of Cav. Milanese and M. Dutuit, in support of their opinion, that from a sulphur cast from the plate, and not from the plate itself, the print in the Cabinet des Estampes of the Coronation of the Virgin was produced, are not directed to the merits of the question, whether the print bears any distinctive peculiarity confirmatory of their opinion.³ The judgment they arrive at is founded upon their interpretation of an ambiguity in the wording of the

¹ See the “*Memorie Spettanti,*” p. 43.

² The drawing appears to have been lost, and Vitali's “*Ragionamenti*” were never published.

³ M. Dutuit describes the first sulphur as having been moulded from the plate in an unfinished state, whilst the second shows the completion of the work, the print being from an intermediate state of it, so that the impression could not have been made from either of the sulphur casts which have been preserved. If not from the plate, it must, according to his argument, have been made from a third sulphur, which has been lost.

account given by Vasari (v., 395), respecting the process pursued by Finiguerra, although the plate under discussion is assumed by them to be not of Finiguerra's workmanship, and they pronounce that from a sulphur cast, and not from the plate itself, according to the meaning given by them to the passage in Vasari, the impression on paper was taken.

Irrespective of the arrangement of the stops in the sentence, and their effect upon the interpretation to be put upon the words of Vasari, the account he gives of the means adopted to produce the print upon paper "pressing over it with a round roller" seems conclusive as to their meaning, that from the plate itself Finiguerra took the impression—for the sulphur cast, so fragile in substance, would have been quite incapable to resist the pressure requisite in the use of the roller, and would have been broken in the operation.

The mark left upon the paper, as suggested by Bartsch, in its application by Finiguerra to clean the surface of the sulphur cast of his work, may have first aroused his attention to the process he thus accidentally made the discovery of; but the surface of the sulphur required to be carefully prepared and cleaned, before a print could have been obtained from it, distinct as the one in question. No reason is given why the sulphur cast, which in every respect was so unsuitable and difficult to take an impression from, should have been selected, in preference to the metal plate the engraver had at his command, from which an imprint upon paper was so far more easily obtainable.

M. Schuchardt, of Weimar, made certain experiments, and published the result in the *Kunstblatt* of 1846 (pp. 49-99), and in Naumann's *Archiv* (vol. iv., p. 60), to prove the possibility of obtaining prints upon paper from sulphur plaques.

Great care, however, is essential in the operation, with so brittle a material, and the pressure needed for extracting

the colouring matter from the finely-indented lines must be very delicately exercised, with the additional difficulty of insuring uniformity of printing from a surface, so uncertain as that of sulphur.

Ottley writes, in his "Inquiry" (268):—"The words of Vasari cannot admit of this construction.¹ Whatever obscurities there may be in his mode of expression, it is most clear that he intended to describe, not one uninterrupted series of varied operations, all for the single purpose of taking an impression of his work on paper, but two distinct processes: the one, beginning with the impressed earth, and ending with the completion of the sulphur, when, its cavities being filled with black, it looked as the silver plate would do after it received the niello: the other, the more simple operation of taking an impression from the plate itself on paper, by first filling the engraved work with soot mixed with oil, then laying damped paper upon the plate, and, lastly, pressing over it with a roller. It is surprising that Baldinucci should not have seen this, and that the manifest unfitness of a substance, so brittle as sulphur for the purposes of impression, should not have occurred to him. Still more surprising it is that he should have been followed, as we shall find to have been the case, in so ill-founded an interpretation of Vasari's words, by others to whom the insufficiency of the sulphur to resist the necessary pressure of the roller did appear most obvious. The impressions, therefore, which Finiguerra was accustomed to take from his engravings on silver were of two kinds. The first, cast out of earthen moulds, in sulphur; the second, printed on paper from the plate itself, by means of a roller."

In accordance with the opinion of Ottley, we consider the impressions, from the pax of the Coronation of the

¹ The construction put upon them by Baldinucci, in his "Notizie de' Professori del disegno" (tome iv., pp. 3-4).

Virgin at Paris, and from that of the Virgin Enthroned at Vienna, clear and distinct as they are in their printing, could not have been obtained from sulphur casts, and that from the silver plates, prior to the infusion of the niello, they both were taken.





CHAPTER III.

NIELLI.

PRINTS UPON PAPER.



OF the prints, catalogued by Duchesne and Passavant as impressions upon paper from niello plates, a considerable collection is in the British Museum. Trial impressions upon paper continued for some few years to be taken by the goldsmiths to enable them to examine the progress that had been made in their work, before a thought was entertained of any extended employment of the plates they had engraved. The imprints thus taken, after fulfilling the purpose for their being so, were thrown aside as worthless, and hence their great rarity and consequent value. The specimens, in fact, which may be regarded as genuine, and as printed from the plates as tests of their work by the early Italian goldsmiths, are extremely few in number. We learn from them how beautiful in design were many of the plaques incised for the infusion of niello, to be applied in the manufacture of gold and silver plate, and how proficient was the skill in engraving, the Italian goldsmiths had arrived at.

The liberality of payment, recorded in the amounts received by Maso Finiguerra and Matteo Dei, offered a tempting incentive for such exercise of their talent to the

leading artists of the time. Besides the representation of the incidents of Bible and Sacred History, for the churches and religious houses, there was a large demand for plate, in diversified variety and fashion, with subjects from the heathen mythology, and of every-day life, and of arabesque device, appropriate for the decoration of arms and armour, and the coffers, tazzas, and drinking-cups which were required for the furniture of the sideboards of the dining-halls, not only of every castle and mansion of importance, but of the halls of the municipalities, and the dwellings of the burghers and inhabitants of the towns, which for centuries were the pride of their possessors. The few examples which have been preserved consist, with rare exceptions, of pieces made for ecclesiastical use, with designs from Christian history, principally in the form of paxes, with delineations of the Beatification of the Virgin, and of scenes in Our Saviour's Passion.

The perfection the chaser's art had attained in Florence is seen in the two unique prints at Paris and Vienna; and as, in each instance, casts from the plates have been preserved, they prove that, at the time the paxes were made, the employment of sulphur moulds had not been abandoned. In the transition from the tedious process hitherto in use, which was then taking place, these two trial imprints upon paper have every presumptive claim to be regarded as the earliest examples of engravings in Italy from incised metal plates, the result of the Italian goldsmith's discovery of the new medium at his command for guidance in his work.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, numerous amateurs throughout Europe and in England directed their attention to the productions of the early engravers. Much additional interest attached to them, in their association with the works of the Italian painters, which then had become the coveted objects of acquisition, owing to the dispersion of so many of the Continental picture galleries,

and the study and investigation of early prints created a taste for their collection. From the literature of the day, we gather how slight was the knowledge of the subject of engraving which had been arrived at, and how much we are indebted to the writers of the present century, for the amount of information they have brought together about it, and have made us acquainted with.

In 1785, Joseph Strutt published his "Biographical Dictionary of Engravers," in two volumes quarto, and at the commencement of his preface, remarks, that "almost every man of taste (in England) was in some degree a collector of prints." Adam Bartsch, who for many years, and up to the time of his death in 1821, was the librarian in chief of the Imperial Library at Vienna, printed numerous catalogues of engravings, the most important being "*Le Peintre Graveur*," previously referred to, in twenty-one volumes, 8vo, Vienna, 1803-21. In the thirteenth volume, issued in 1811, the first mention of "niello" prints is made. The Imperial Library, according to Bartsch, did not possess a single specimen described as a niello, and any distinctive appreciation of their merit had not, at the time of the publication of the thirteenth volume, been entertained. His descriptions of nielli are limited to thirty-two belonging to Count Durazzo, a member of an old Hungarian family, then resident at Genoa.¹ Bartsch had not seen them, but transcribed the particulars given by Lanzi in his "*Storia Pittorica*."

The investigation was taken up by Mr. William Young Ottley, who, for a short period prior to his death in 1836, held the appointment of keeper of the prints in the British Museum. He had devoted much time to the study of Italian art, and previous to assuming his official position

¹ Charles de Durazzo was General of the army of Louis, King of Hungary (circa 1310), and deposed Jeanne, 1st Queen of Naples. He aspired to the throne of Hungary, and was assassinated. Jeanne 2nd, Queen of Naples, who died in 1435, was Charles de Durazzo's daughter.

had accumulated, during frequent travels abroad, many curious early prints. In 1816 he published his "Inquiry," before mentioned, written with learning and research, which has continued to be a standard authority on the subject. An account of nielli, accompanied by a translation of Bartsch's description of the copies of the thirty-two prints of them belonging to Count Durazzo, formed a leading feature of the "Inquiry," accompanied by a dissertation upon Maso Finiguerra, and the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin, and other nielli he gave the particulars of, including an impression from a pax of an Enthronement of the Virgin in his own possession (Duchesne, 54): the text is illustrated with facsimiles, of the last named impression, and of the print of the Coronation of the Virgin in the Bibliothèque at Paris.

Disregarded as they previously had been, considerable competition was suddenly aroused, by the desire to possess these specimens of early Italian workmanship. Count Leopold Cicognara attained a prominent position in the art society of Europe, at the commencement of the present century; he was made president of an *Accademia delle belle arti* at Venice, on its institution in 1808 by Eugene Beauharnais, who, in 1805, had been appointed by Napoleon Viceroy of Italy. Cicognara was very zealous in promoting the interest which had been created respecting nielli, enhanced by the accounts he subsequently published, descriptive of the specimens in his own possession.

Duchesne, who had joined the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris in 1797, of which he became the keeper, an appointment retained by him until his death in 1855, published in 1826 his "Essai sur les Nielles," wherein he gives an account of all the known examples of nielli he was acquainted with, amounting to the large number of 428. Of those in the Bibliothèque, some few may have been acquired with the purchase of the prints of the Abbé Marolles in 1667, from which the institution of the Cabinet des Estampes in the

Bibliothèque dated its commencement. Duchesne tells us (p. 57), that on the occasion of the visit of the Abbé Zani to the Cabinet des Estampes in 1797, when he discovered the impression from the plate of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin at Florence, that the officers of the department were unacquainted with the term "niello," used by the Abbé in his designation of it.

At the period of the publication of the "Essai", 136 of the 428 specimens of the newly discovered rarities, enumerated by Duchesne, were described as being in the French National collection. No explanation is given of the source whence so large an acquisition of these rare prints had been made, beyond the statement that they were selected from different volumes belonging to the Marolles collection, and added to those purchased at the Silvestre and other sales. From the account given in the preliminary chapters of the "Essai", we learn the great interest that had been created in these early examples of the engraver's skill.

The demand for them, and the secrecy as to whence they came, enjoined, as it was said, by the pride of the owners who had been compelled by the troubles in Europe to dispose of their possessions, naturally dimmed the critical acumen of their eager purchasers. In the second decade of the present century a scheme was brought into operation, by persons of established position in Venice, for the manufacture of the coveted rarities. The development of the scheme was promoted by the originators having met with two young men, named Pirona and Zanetti, natives of Friuli, who had been educated as goldsmiths at Udine, long celebrated for its skilled manufactures in metal—in gold, silver, and copper, and very accomplished workmen they proved to be.

Cups, chalices, paxes, snuff-boxes, and other pieces of ornamented plate infused with niello were made, with extraordinary exactness of imitation of fifteenth century treatment. The taste these clever artificers possessed guided them in the study of subjects selected from early illuminated manu-

scripts, and they imagined and executed numerous niellated works, which would have been from their own merit desirable acquisitions, had no deception been intended.

San Quirico and Alvise Albrizzi, engaged in the sale of antiquities at Venice, were the agents through whom the operations were conducted, and for a long time the trade was continued with uninterrupted success, supported by a prominent member of the society in the city, whose judgment was deferred to in all matters of art, and who, in his published works, gave a critical account of the process of making nielli, and cited many of the newly discovered examples, with dissertations upon the early period they were attributable to. This materially anticipated any suspicions as to their genuineness, and the best judges in Europe were thrown off their guard. Emboldened by the eagerness of their customers, the supply went on too rapidly, and carelessness ensued, until eventually surprise at the quantity of these rare works brought into the market aroused incredulity, and a silver pax, bought, amongst other acquisitions, by the officials of the Bibliothèque at Paris for a considerable sum, attracted critical attention, resulting, after much controversy, in its being condemned as a modern production.

The disposal of the prints from plates chased in the similitude of the early nielli, was managed, with clever caution, by Antonio Zen, who was at the time in the employ of the Venice dealers. He travelled with them to Vienna, Paris, Brussels, and London, and printsellers and amateurs were alike deceived by their apparent antiquity. Purchases of considerable amount were made for the Imperial Library at Vienna, the Royal collection at Brussels, and the Bibliothèque at Paris, several private buyers being also met with in the two last-named cities. The authorities of the British Museum do not seem to have bought a single specimen, although many by gift and purchase have since found their way into the National collection. In 1826 the only example it was in the possession of, according to Duchesne's "Essai," was the

small circular silver plate of the Nativity (D. 29), obtained, apparently, from Messrs. Woodburn. Extensive acquisitions of the nielli prints were eagerly secured for the portfolios of collectors in England; and on their reappearance in the auction-room no diminution, save in a few instances, has occurred in the prices they have realized. After the trade was brought to an end, by the suspicions that had been created, the Venice dealers, who had taken a prominent lead in its promotion, made no mystery of the extensive frauds they had so successfully carried on.

In the British Museum there is a print of an Adoration of the Magi (Duchesne 32), about four inches square, the figures delicate in drawing, slightly shaded, and thrown forward by a dark background; the outer edges of the plate are cut in small incurved grooves. Six other impressions of the print are known; one with an added print at the top—of the Annunciation—upon separate paper, but laid down on the same mount, the manner of its treatment being the same, with the outer edges indented, as in the Adoration of the Magi. These two last-named prints belonged to M. Galichon, and were bought at the sale by auction after his death in 1875, by M. Clément of Paris for 4,100 francs. Of this added print of the Annunciation no other example is known. One of the seven known impressions of the Adoration of the Magi is surrounded by prints from thirty minute medallions, with figures of animals. Duchesne (p. 144) mentions this last-named impression of the Adoration, as having been shown to him in 1825 by M. Vendramini, the engraver at Paris, who had bought it at Milan, and adds that it was the print Zani¹ had met with in the possession of the senator Martelli of Florence. Passavant (i., 292, 477) remarks that he saw it in London in 1850, the then owner having procured it from Alvise Albrizzi, the dealer at Venice.

¹ "Materiali" (p. 48).

The style of these prints, of the Adoration of the Magi, and of the Annunciation, is very different from that of any known specimen of the work of the early Florentine goldsmiths ; there is great clearness and skill in the drawing of both of them, with clever observance, in the treatment of the figures, of the fashion of costume prevalent in Florence early in the fifteenth century. The design of the Adoration has been compared to a picture of the same subject by Gentile da Fabriano at Florence : but beyond the crowded groups both are filled with, there is very slight similarity between them.

A second plate—of the composition of the Adoration of the Magi,—corresponding exactly in size, was copied, line for line, with careful observance of each scratch and imperfection of execution, in minute precision, from the plate which first was produced. The fact of these two plates being in existence does not appear to have been mentioned by any writer upon the niello prints, or to have been noticed in any sale catalogue. An impression from this second plate was sent from abroad on approval for purchase in the spring of 1884 : a photograph of it is in the Print Room of the British Museum. On comparison it is seen to be equally clever and bright in execution ; the priority of either print it is impossible to pronounce upon ; but various slight differences of detail can be discovered, which, in fact, could not have been avoided, in the repetition of such minute workmanship. An impression from one of the plates was sold at the Durazzo sale at Stuttgart in 1872 for 3,800 florins.

A presumed identification has been made of the print, with an Adoration of the Magi referred to by Ottley, who, at page 316 of his “Inquiry,” gives a quotation from Zani’s “*Materiali*” (48), to the effect, “that Zani saw, in the Martelli collection at Florence, a print of the Adoration of the Magi, taken, as he supposes, from an engraved plate of silver, which, from the multiplicity, the arrangement, and

the minuteness of its figures, he judged, as he tells us, the first moment he saw it, to be the production of Maso Finiguerra." In a note (46) on this passage, Zani adds: "I shall speak at large concerning this print in another place (meaning a more extensive work he contemplated the publication of), and I shall have justly to complain that another impression similar to it, and admirably preserved, was cruelly denied to me by a picture-dealer at Rome, to whom I had candidly discovered its value." Lanzi, in his "*Storia Pittorica*," in his account of Finiguerra (English edition, 1852, i., 102), after describing the niello of the Assumption (the Coronation) of the Virgin, proceeds: "To this I may add the Epiphany, in an inferior style, but more exactly finished, which I found in the possession of the senator Martelli, besides a duplicate belonging to S. E. Seratti. It appears, from the style, to be the work of Finiguerra, and to have been executed before the Assumption." Cicognara, in his "*Memorie Spettanti*" (17), mentions the print of the Adoration of the Magi, named by Duchesne (32), and infers that it is by the hand of Finiguerra, executed prior to the Assumption of the Virgin of 1452.

The crowded scene, arranged, with great ingenuity, from the study of the compositions of the early illuminators, is clearly of modern drawing, in the distinct articulation and familiarity of features of the various figures, and the fulness of line wherewith the limbs and the draperies are expressed. The technical execution of the engraving can be critically studied in the British Museum, by the comparison of the print in the collection, side by side with the photograph from the print from the second plate, affording confirmatory evidence that they are both of nineteenth century workmanship.



CHAPTER IV.

NIELLI.

MODERN IMITATIONS, FABRICATED AT VENICE IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY.



AMONGST the prints described by Duchesne as taken from niello plates, there is one of the Resurrection of Our Saviour (D. 177, 122), signed at the foot "DE OPVS PEREGRINI CE^S."

A copy of the print is given in Duchesne's "Essai sur les Nielles : " in the preface he relates (p. 69) that " by chance he discovered, in a parcel of old prints, bought at the sale of the Silvestre collection, in 1811, several nielli, one of which represented the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, 'DE OPVS PEREGRINI CE^S' being written in the margin at the foot."

Bartsch, in his thirteenth volume (p. 205), enumerates ten small prints, of much artistic excellence, by an anonymous engraver, four being marked with the monogram P, and two with the letters O.P.D.C. In his account, in the same volume (p. 49), of the thirty-two Durazzo nielli, three of them are stated to be marked with the same monogram, P. The number Duchesne ascribed to this anonymous engraver, by the designation of nielli, including the ten Bartsch had given descriptions of, the P being amplified by Duchesne into "Peregrini," is sixty-six, thirty-seven of them being stated to be in the Cabinet des Estampes. The list of the engraver's works was still further amplified by Passavant

(v., 205) to the number of seventy-eight. The first in Bartsch's list of the ten prints, ascribed by him to the master P, the subject being a seated child holding a bird, of which the British Museum possesses an impression, is larger in size than the other nine, and is marked with the monogram, and the addition, in this instance only, of the date 1511, the date and the monogram being on a tablet suspended on a tree; the monogram, on the others of Bartsch's list that are marked with it, is placed in their margins. From this circumstance, Ottley (569) considered the print was by a different engraver, which is apparent on examination. Passavant (v., 220) concurred in this opinion, pronouncing the print in question to be inferior in execution, and placed it apart, as by another engraver, thus eliminating the date 1511, which would seriously have prejudiced the presumed early title of many of the seventy-eight specimens classified as the work of "Peregrini."

The first published notice of the name of "Peregrini" was made by Zani, who had seen the print of the Resurrection, and, as we gather from his remarks, entertained no suspicion of its genuineness. In his "*Enciclopédie Méthodique*," première partie (vol. xv., p. 332), 1819-1828, he describes a print of the Resurrection, and mentions a first state of it, with the inscription "OPVS PEREGRINI," but does not inform us where he had seen it; he interprets the letters O.P.D.C. to be the initials of "Opus Peregrini de Cesena," the idea having, as he states, been suggested to him by the signature on the print of a niello, representing the Resurrection, in the possession of Messrs. Woodburn. The Marquis Malaspina of Milan had acquired one of these prints of the Resurrection, and, in the catalogue of his engravings (Milan, 1824), he gives the reading of the O.P.D.C. letters on the print of Neptune (B. xiii., 208, 5), which is one of the ten of Bartsch's list of the works of the anonymous master P, as "Opus Peregrini de Cesio." In the same year an impression of the Resurrection made its appearance in London,

at the sale of the collection of Sir Mark Masterman Sykes, and, having passed through the portfolios of different proprietors, it is now in the Print Room of the British Museum. In the Sykes catalogue, which was prepared by Ottley, "Di Cesia" is the interpretation of "Peregrini's" locality.

Wilson, in his *Catalogue raisonné* (1828), tells us (p. 16) that to Duchesne the discovery of "Peregrini" is due. The amplification, however, of the monogram P into "Peregrini", first took place at Venice in the first quarter of the present century, in the inscription of it at the foot of this print of the Resurrection; and Duchesne's acquaintance with the print, and consequently with the name of "Peregrini," arose, no doubt, on the occasion of the large purchase of nielli prints made for the Bibliothèque, of the Venice dealers, instead of from the parcel of old prints bought at the Silvestre sale in 1811.

The arguments adduced in support of the personality of the newly-discovered worker in niello, so many of whose prints had started into existence during the years 1820-4, in the hands of the dealers in works of art, and in the collections of amateurs throughout Europe, must be read in Cicognara's¹ "*Memorie Spettanti*," where he interprets the locality of "Peregrini" to be Cento, a town between Bologna and Ferrara, instead of Cesena, and pronounces him to have been a pupil of Francesco Francia.

Considerable doubts had for some time been entertained respecting the authenticity of a large number of the nielli, which had found their way into the public and private collections of Europe, and serious rumours were the subject of very general discussion, as to the Count's complicity in the trade that had been carried on. In Duchesne's "*Essai*," published in 1826, we find no mention of the name of Cicognara, nor allusion to the purchases for the Bibliothèque, which had been made from the Venice dealers. In

¹ Cicognara resigned the appointments he held at Venice in 1827, and died in 1834.

Ottley's "Inquiry" there is the same significant avoidance of any mention of Cicognara, although at the date of the publication, in 1816, the Count had for some years previously been known by his publications, and his official position in the Art Society of Europe. After Cicognara's death in 1834, his relative Alessandro Zanetti, with whom he had been closely associated, prepared a catalogue of his nielli and engravings, with a view to their sale, which was published at Venice in 1837, by the title of "*Le Premier Siècle de la Calcographie.*" In a note at p. 95, and elsewhere throughout the volume, further mention is made of "Peregrini," and detailed accounts are given of the various silver plates and prints of nielli, which belonged to Cicognara.

The nielli in the Print Room of the British Museum were mainly acquired with an extensive series of early Italian engravings belonging to the late Mr. Coningham, which was bought in its entirety, during the curatorship of Mr. Josi, shortly preceding that gentleman's death in 1845. The undoubted genuineness of nearly all the early prints comprised in the Coningham collection, and the advantageous terms upon which the negotiation for them was concluded, prevented objection being raised to portions of the purchase, which otherwise would have been essential with respect to many of the so-called nielli.

Almost the last of the old private continental collections, of which mention is frequently made by the writers upon the history of engraving, was brought to the auctioneer's hammer in 1872-3. Count Jacopo Durazzo, before referred to, whilst resident at Venice as ambassador from the Emperor of Austria in 1774, made various purchases of engravings for Prince Albert of Saxe Techsen, which are now in the Albertina at Vienna. During the years he devoted to the accomplishment of his commission, the Count formed for himself a collection of prints, of much value and interest. Important amongst them were the thirty-two small prints, previously referred to by their designation of nielli.

Copies of these thirty-two prints were made for the Count. He seems to have guarded the originals carefully against inspection, as from the copies¹ only particulars were derived, the descriptions given by Bartsch, and repeated by Ottley, being taken from these copies, and for a long time the so-called *Durazzo nielli* were the only recognized specimens of trial proofs of early goldsmiths' workmanship, of which an account had been published.

Passavant, in the first volume of his "*Peintre Graveur*" (p. 270), writes that in 1835 he had been permitted by Count Giuseppe Durazzo, the then representative of the family, to inspect his collection of prints, and he informs us the *nielli* consisted of a sulphur cast of the Coronation of the Virgin, nineteen silver plates, and 189 prints upon paper, so that the *nielli* had largely increased in number, since the first formation of the collection by Count Jacopo Durazzo. On the occasion of the sale of the Durazzo prints subsequently by auction at Stuttgart, in 1872, detailed accounts of them were given in the sale catalogue. Besides the thirty-two prints originally belonging to Count Jacopo

¹ Zanetti, in the preface to a series of these copies, described in his "*Calcographie*," gives the following account of them :—"Antoine Armanno, an amateur of intelligence and restorer of pictures, whilst traversing Italy to enrich the collection of Count Jacopo Durazzo, ambassador at Venice from the Republic of Genoa, discovered in different places, and bought for his master, the greater part of the pieces we are about to describe. The ancient gallery of the Gaddi of Florence supplied a certain number, as well as many of the rarest prints of the first period of art. It seems that the fac-similes of these, the only *nielli* cited by Bartsch, were executed for the illustration of an account of the Durazzo collection, proposed to be published by the Abbé Maure Boni, but which never saw the light. We are indebted for the engraving of them to Antoine Dal Pian, a Venetian, and a certain Jean David, of Genoa, a painter, and a good engraver '*à l'eau-forte*,' whom Count Durazzo had brought with him to Venice. The *nielli*, from which the fac-similes were taken, afterwards became the property of Count Jerome Durazzo, the last Duke of Genoa, who, a short time previously, had also bought the prints of his relative, Count Jacopo; and eventually they passed into the collection of the Marquis Marcello, of the same family."

Durazzo, there were amongst the additions made by his successors, several designated as nielli, of which duplicates were in the Bibliothèque at Paris, and in the Sykes, Malaspina, and other cabinets, and of a considerable number of them no previous description had been given. Amongst the additions to the nielli was an impression of the Adoration of the Magi (Duchesne, 32), which sold for the large sum of 3,800 florins, and two impressions of the "Peregrini" Resurrection. One of these prints of the Resurrection, with the inscription "DE OPVS PEREGRINI CE^S," was bought at the sale for the Museum at Berlin for 1,400 florins, and the other, with the different inscription "OPVS PEREGRINO," for Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris, for 2,680 florins.

The plate most probably is still in existence. The irreverence of the figure of the risen Saviour, and the harshness of expression pervading the composition, in its variance from the sentiment characteristic of early Florentine treatment, betrays its modern workmanship, notwithstanding the skilful imitativeness wherewith it is engraved.

In 1860 the first volume of Passavant's "Peintre Graveur" was published at Leipsic. The subject of "nielli" is very fully discussed, and the number of them is amplified to upwards of 850; the 428, described in Duchesne's "Essai," being increased by the particulars of 431 additional specimens. Much information on the subject of the nielli, Passavant informs us (i., 270), was furnished by the MS. notes added to a copy of the "Essai" lent to him by M. Rudolph Weigel. A large proportion of these added specimens are stated, in the accounts of them, to have belonged to Albrizzi, Cicognara, Santini, San Quirico, Antonio Zen, and other similar proprietors, and were admittedly of modern manufacture.

The source whence they emanated is intimated by Passavant (i., 273) in an extract from Villardi's "Manuale" (Milano, 1843, p. 93), "A défaut d'originaux, celui qui

désirerait avoir des copies, ou même des plaques niellées, gravées par les nommés Pirona, Zanetti, Comanirato, pourra s'adresser à la fabrique d'armes antiques à Venise, sous la raison des frères San Quirico, editeurs." And on the same page, after a reference to the nielli of Count Leopold Cicognara, and the 124 fac-similes wherewith the Count had illustrated his "*Memorie Spettanti*," Passavant writes:—"We must here notice that, besides the fac-similes executed for Cicognara's work, very many false ones were engraved at Venice, and sold at Paris and London by the dealers in works of art, with the intention of deceiving the public. The collectors of proofs of nielli ought, therefore, to be on their guard against being deceived by these imitations, executed, for the most part, with very considerable skill; some have fallen under our observation, coming from a dealer at Venice." And in the next page Passavant continues his remarks:—"The dealer Alvise Albrizzi of Venice sold to the library at Vienna many impressions of nielli, of which the original niellated plates were in the possession of Count Cicognara, who had described them, without the additional information that prints of them upon paper were also in existence. The suspicion of fraud is so much the greater, as it would be absolutely beyond all probability that of these nielli, belonging to different epochs and different localities in Italy, the plates should all have passed into the Cicognara cabinet, and the trial proofs on paper into the hands of the dealer Albrizzi. In the Santini collection there are also many proofs of a similar character."

Acquainted as he was with the extensive frauds that had been practised, it is surprising that Passavant should have adopted the discovery of "*Peregrini*," and written in his fifth volume (pp. 205-220) the account of the artist, and the critical description of the seventy-eight prints attributed to him, without any reservation or expression of doubt, either as to the reality of his existence, or as to Cicognara's amplification of him into a pupil of Francesco Francia.

But we must call to recollection the period of Passavant's death in August, 1861, to remind us that, at the time, this account of "Peregrini" made its appearance, the author of "Le Peintre Graveur" had been dead three years ;—the first volume was printed at Leipsic in 1860, and the fifth volume was not published until 1864.

An article upon Baccio Baldini was contributed by M. Kolloff to Meyer's *Kunstler Lexikon*, and published in the volume for 1878. M. Kolloff for some years held an appointment in the Cabinet des Estampes : the records of the department, where Duchesne's "Essai" had been compiled, afforded him opportunities for the study of the subject, resulting in his statement, that "the Florentine goldsmiths took impressions on paper from the silver plates, previous to the infusion of the niello. The number, however, which has been preserved is extremely small, as they nearly all were lost. A great mistake was committed by Duchesne, when, in his 'Essai,' he classified in a separate section, a large number of small prints, by the name of nielli, from which he alleged the art of copper-plate engraving first derived its impulse. He describes more than 400, the amount being doubled by Passavant. The definition of nielli, or any attempt at explanation of the difference existing between them and copper-plate engravings, was not taken into consideration by either Duchesne or Passavant. Amongst the prints they enumerated, there are not probably more than thirty, which can correctly be called nielli. They are, for the most part, merely ordinary engravings, described under false names in auction catalogues, and worked up to fabulously high prices, at the expense of wealthy collectors."

The late Mr. Edward Cheney, of Badger Hall, in Shropshire, to whose knowledge and critical judgment we are indebted for much valuable information respecting the early Italian engravers, and for many of the particulars which have been preserved respecting the fabrication of

nielli, in the early part of the present century, resided in Venice during lengthened periods. He succeeded in purchasing, at different times, from the Venice agents specimen impressions from many of the plaques, engraved for the various paxes, coffers, and other pieces of silver, and knife-handles, they had been engaged in the manufacture of, taken from the plates prior to the infusion of the niello. The acquisition of these prints was made, principally from the dealer San Quirico, who, in selling them to Mr. Cheney, "spoke with boastful satisfaction of the clever impositions he had practised." They consisted of about 230 pieces,—comprising thirty subjects, important in size, from New Testament History, fifty small scenes of the Passion of Our Saviour and representations of saints, twenty-five of mythological and figure subjects, twenty of portraits, and two sets of knife-handles, of twenty-seven and twenty-one in number respectively; the remainder were impressions from the small plaques of ornament, for the corners and sides of the various paxes and other pieces of silver they were engraved for insertion in. A large proportion are included by Passavant in his catalogue of nielli, in the first volume of "*Le Peintre Graveur*," and a considerable number are impressions from the plates, engraved for the silver paxes and other pieces, designated as nielli in the collection of Count Cicognara, by whom a detailed account of each plate was given in his "*Memorie Spettanti*," with references to the distinguished owners they were said to have been made for, and laudatory remarks upon their alleged antiquity, and the beauty of their early workmanship. An accompanying folio volume was published by the Count of eighteen *tavole*, comprising, amongst the prints represented in them, engravings of the so-called nielli, and of the early prints described in the "*Memorie Spettanti*."

The prints acquired by Mr. Cheney comprised impressions taken from the plaques of three of the silver nielli before they were niellated, of which engravings are given

on tavola ii. ; four from a series of twelve subjects of Our Saviour's Passion, and one from a Pieta on tavola iii. ; six, from different subjects, on tavola iv. ; four of knife-handles and three of other subjects on tavola v. ; and impressions from all the plates, in their entirety, with the various pieces of ornament, of the four paxes, of which engravings are given on tavole vii., viii., viii.^A, and viii.^B. Of the four paxes engraved on the last named tavole, accounts are supplied by Passavant : tavola vii. (P. i., 463), tavola viii. (P. i., 473), tavola viii.^A (P. i., 464), and tavola viii.^B (P. i., 518), who describes them as in the Cicognara collection. The Coronation of the Madonna, which is engraved on the lunette of the pax, tavola viii.^A, Passavant states had been pronounced to be a modern counterfeit, and that impressions from it had been sold by San Quirico. The same judgment has to be pronounced upon all the other so-called nielli, copied in the Cicognara volume, of which there are prints in the Cheney collection, supplied by San Quirico, from the plates of them before they were niellated, and made up into the paxes and other pieces they were fabricated for. Duplicate impressions from several of these plates are in the Imperial Library at Vienna, acquired by purchase from San Quirico's partner, Alvise Albrizzi.

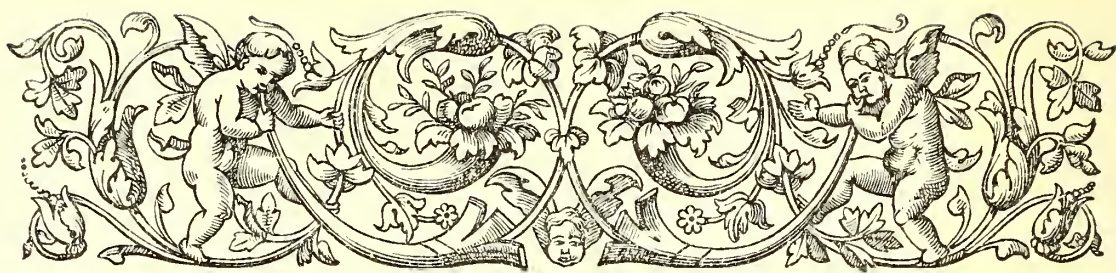
One of the largest of the Cheney prints, from the plates of these modern nielli, is of a Madonna sustaining the Infant Saviour on her knees, enthroned on a raised daïs, with three saints standing on the right and three on the left : the arch of the canopy above the Madonna, with an angel on either side of it, bears the inscription, in reverse, "AVE REGINA CELI." There are two impressions from the plate : one, of the finished state, and the other a trial proof, before much progress had been made with the engraving. The plate, when niellated, was mounted in a richly-chased silver frame, and sold as a pax to the Bibliothèque at Paris. The rude and inartistic character of the workmanship occasioned a critical examination to be made, and it was pronounced to

be of modern manufacture, and the pax was returned: the correctness of the estimate arrived at is apparent in the two prints in the Cheney collection, which correspond with the silver pax described by Passavant (i., 302, 542).

A few other unfinished trial-proofs are in the Cheney collection. The impression from the plate of the Adoration of the Magi, used for the Cicognara pax (tavola viii.), is only in outline, very clever in drawing, illustrating the talent the engravers were possessed of, who were engaged upon the delicate work entrusted to them,—before carelessness and haste ensued, and artificers of inferior skill were employed, in the hurry to meet the demand that had arisen for the rare specimens of the early nielli they had been called upon to imitate.

Accompanying the prints are three pencil drawings, the most carefully executed being one for a pax of the Virgin enthroned, attended by saints, of which no engraving is known: the second is the original design for the print of a Pieta in the Cheney collection; and the third, unfinished, is a sketch for the proposed arrangement, on the sides of a small casket, of prints which are also in the Cheney collection.

Mr. Cheney died in 1884, and on the sale by auction of his prints in the month of May, in the following year, in London, comprising, amongst the works of other masters, choice specimens of the prints of Marcantonio Raimondi, and Rembrandt, the series he had succeeded in forming of impressions from the plates of these modern nielli was retained in the portfolio he had arranged them in, and bought for the Trustees of the British Museum.



CHAPTER V.

THE PLANETS. THE OTTO PRINTS.

FROM the date of the discovery, which with very general consent was supposed to have been made by Tommaso Finiguerra, of the new method brought into exercise by the goldsmiths of Florence for testing their work, we are for some few years without any specific indication of the extended application of it that shortly afterwards ensued.

Vasari adds to the account previously quoted (v., 396), that "he (Finiguerra) was succeeded by Baccio Baldini, a Florentine goldsmith, who had not himself much knowledge of design, and all that he did was from the invention and design of Sandro Botticelli."¹

Of Baccio Baldini no particulars have come down to us : his birth is considered to have taken place in Florence in 1436 : the discontinuance of the series of illustrations he commenced engraving, after the drawings by Sandro Botticelli, for the folio edition of "Dante," published at Florence in 1481, was occasioned most probably by his death in, or shortly after, that year. Cav. Milanese searched through the Florence archives, but found no mention of the name of

¹ "Fu seguitato costui (Finiguerra) da Baccio Baldini orefice fiorentino, il quale, non avendo molto disegno, tutto quello che fece fu con invenzione e disegno di Sandro Botticello."

Baccio, in association with that of Baldini. Kolloff, in his article upon Baldini, fails to supply further information, and our knowledge remains restricted to Vasari's brief statement.

Baccio Baldini must have been working as a metal chaser, long before any association could have arisen with Sandro Botticelli, who was in his fifth year at the time of the supposed completion, in 1452, of the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin. Much speculation has been indulged in by the different writers, and by Bartsch, supplemented by Passavant, a long list of engravings was catalogued under the name of Baldini, with but slight foundation, save in a few instances, for any such attribution. Of the painters, his contemporaries, we acquire information, from the name and the date they frequently inscribed upon their pictures, and from the historical incidents connected with the subjects of them. But in the early years, when the artists' drawings were first committed to the copper, the practice by the engravers of signing their plates had not come into use, and no instance of the verification of their work, by the addition of name or initials, has been recognized; unless we accept the prints of the anonymous master P (B. xiii., 205) as belonging to the early period that has been ascribed to them.

THE PLANETS.

The first known examples, to which a date can be attributed, of the adoption by the Italian artists of the extended use engraving was found to be applicable to, with the direct intention of obtaining imprints upon paper, is a series of seven prints of the planets (B. xiii., 190). An account of the prints is in Strutt's "Biographical Dictionary" (1785), where detailed descriptions are given of them, and of a calendar they are prefaced with, accompanied by fac-similes, somewhat reduced in size, of the calendar, and of the print

of the planet Venus. The series, in its entirety, came from the collection of Dr. Monro of London, known by his early patronage of our great landscape painter, J. M. W. Turner, and was then, and has continued to be unique, no other impression of any of the prints being known. They are printed from plates, which had undergone more than one process of re-cutting, with none of the original work remaining, save the outline of the composition. The attention they demand, in considering their relationship with the history of engraving, is materially enhanced by the information, derived from the calendar, that they were published in, or shortly antecedent to 1465, as the direction for ascertaining the date of Easter commences in that year. The following inscription (in Italian) is at the foot:—"If you wish to learn when Easter will be, you must ascertain the *millesimo* which runs that year, and you will (then) find it; and understand that the letter A stands for April, and the letter M stands for March."

The particulars of the attributes of the planet, with its different properties, and an account of its astronomical position and changes, are set out in the inscriptions in the lower margins; the pictured representations given in each print are of scenes of mundane occupation, induced by the influence over the passions and inclinations of men, born under the ascendancy of the planets, wherewith the seven gods of the heathen mythology, in their supposed power over human actions and pursuits, are identified: they are crowded with incidents, surmounted by the Zodiacal figure at the top.

The landscapes and the architectural backgrounds set at rest any question as to the place of their production. The various groups are habited in the fashion of costume, which, in the middle of the fifteenth century, prevailed at Florence. Many of the buildings, introduced in the busy scenes delineated, are recognizable as still existing in the city. This is particularly observable in the print of the planet

Mercury; amongst the edifices in the background, on the left, is the dome of San Giovanni, and the massive structure facing the street, on the same side, is a portion of the Palazzo Vecchio, with its indented battlements, and the round-headed windows beneath them. The church immediately beyond is intended probably for San Miniato, which has been brought into the view. The building in the centre is the Loggie de' Lanzi, the *fanali* for beacon fires or torches ranged along the top being identical with the well-known one by Niccolo Grossi, at the corner of the Palazzo Strozzi, and the tower of the Bargello rises above the roofs on the right.

But the bustle of city life portrayed in the same print is even of still greater interest. Benvenuto Cellini tells us in his own memoir, that on his return to Florence, after a two years' absence at Rome, Giovanni Battista Sagliano lent him part of his shop, which stood at the side of the new market, hard by Candi's bank: and further on he gives the account of the quarrel he had with Gherardo Guasconte, which happened one day, as he leaned against the door of the house of one of the family, who had three grand goldsmith's shops in the town. The open *bottega* at the side of the street, with the artizans in the interior working at their craft, and the connoisseur lounging at the door examining a chased vase of their manufacture, is like an illustration of Cellini's narrative, with its representation of Florentine life at the time.

The following translations, of the descriptions of the planets Venus and Mercury, will explain their character:—

“Venus is a feminine sign, placed in the third and cold heaven. She is moist and temperate, and she has these properties: she loves fine garments adorned with gold and silver, and songs and enjoyments and games; she is lascivious and sweet of voice; she has beautiful eyes and forehead; she is light of body and plump of flesh, and of medium height, given to all works connected with beauty.

Subject to her is brass ; her day is Wednesday, and the first hour is 8.15 and 22, and her night is Tuesday. Jupiter is her friend, and Mercury her enemy, and she has two Houses, the Bull (Taurus) by day, and the Scales (Libra) by night, and for her counsellor she has the Sun. Her life, or exaltation is (in) Pisces, and her death or humiliation (declension) is (in) Virgo, and she goes in ten months twelve signs, commencing from Libra, and in twenty-five days she goes one sign, and in one day she goes one degree and twelve minutes, and in one hour thirty minutes."

"Mercury is a male planet, placed in the second and dry heaven, but, because his dryness is very lasting, he is cold with those [signs] which are cold, and moist with the moist ones : he is eloquent, ingenious, loves science, mathematics, and studies in divination ; in body he is slight as he is graceful, and in stature perfect. Of metals he has quicksilver ; his day is Wednesday, with the first hour 8.15 and 22 ; his night is the Dominical day [Sunday] ; he has for his friend the Sun, and for his enemy Venus. His life or exaltation is [in] Virgo, and his death or humiliation [declension] is [in] Pisces. He has for Houses Gemini by day and Virgo by night ; he goes twelve signs in thirty-eight days, commencing from Virgo in twenty days, and in two hours he goes one sign."

Bartsch had not seen the prints : in the thirteenth volume of his "*Peintre-Graveur*," published in 1811, the detailed particulars there given are translations from the descriptions of them in Strutt's Dictionary. At the date of the publication of Ottley's "*Inquiry*" in 1816, the eight prints had passed by gift or purchase from Dr. Monro into the British Museum collection ; Ottley's account of them is also copied from that given by Strutt, supplemented with particulars of two prints of an earlier series, exactly the same in composition, larger in size, "somewhat still more ancient" ; one, of the planet Luna, belonging to Mr. Douce, which under the bequest in his will is now in Bodley's Library at

Oxford, and the other, of the planet Mars, then belonging to Mr. Lloyd.

In 1828 Mr. Wilson published "a catalogue raisonné of the select collection of engravings of an amateur," describing the prints belonging to him, and amongst them was "the set of planets, which are questionless more ancient than those in the British Museum." The acquisition of the set thus referred to had been made by purchase of Messrs. Woodburn, dealers in pictures and prints in London, who brought them from abroad, and in a note Mr. Wilson added, "The impression of the planet Mars, noticed as belonging to Mr. Lloyd, (showing the state of the plate before the shadows were worn away), has been added to the set described."

These seven prints, and the Lloyd duplicate of the planet Mars, have since passed into the British Museum collection, with the addition of another duplicate of the planet Sol: these duplicates of the planets Mars and Sol are in the first state of the printing from the plates, before they had been subjected to any re-cutting. Mr. Wilson's seven prints have all, more or less, been re-engraved, but they retain much of their original clearness. They are unaccompanied by a calendar, which forms so important an adjunct to Dr. Monro's unique series.

On comparison of the two series, which from their deposit in the British Museum can now be made, we arrive at the knowledge that the prints from the Wilson collection, antecedent in their date, are, both in drawing and in their incision upon the copper, of far higher quality, and that the Monro prints are copies from them, and of later publication. Owing to the smaller size of the Monro prints, many portions of the details of the scenes represented are omitted; there is occasional reversal of the figures, but the general arrangement of the composition in each series, is for the most part in the same direction. The sense and orthography of the descriptive accounts of the planets, in the

margins at the foot, is the same in both series, with occasional variations of words and sentences and spelling; in these descriptive accounts, the Wilson set also bears many marks of priority; the inverted “2” is always made use of, the letter in the Monro set being in the usual direction: the minuscule letters “b,” “q,” and “3” frequently occur in both of them.

To Botticelli and Baldini, their authorship, as well as that of the other anonymous Florentine prints, has by the different writers been alternately attributed. Botticelli's youth, at the time of their publication, refutes the correctness of their ascription to him; they certainly are not by the same hand as the illustrations of the “Divina Commedia,” and the other corresponding prints, characteristic of niello workmanship, which Baldini is considered to have been the engraver of. The style of their execution has no affinity with the deep method of cutting Antonio del Pollajuolo was in the habit of using, as we learn from the print bearing his signature. The only opinion we can with certainty arrive at about them is, that they were executed during the period 1460-1465, and that they are the earliest known examples of the exercise by the Florentine artists of the process of engraving upon metal plates for printing from.

THE OTTO PRINTS.

In succession to the prints of the Planets, and closely approximate to them in the date of their production, is a series of impressions from twenty-four small plaques, designated as the Otto prints (B. xiii., 142), which came also from one of the *ateliers* of Florence. With some few exceptions, one impression only from each plaque has been preserved, and they are seemingly trial proofs, taken by the chaser, in the same way as was done from plates prepared for completion with niello, for the purpose of testing his work, before forming them into the pieces of plate they

were engraved for, without any preconceived intention of publishing impressions from them. The short embroidered tunics and fashion of dress of the men, and the long drooping head-dresses and costume of the women, tell us that, in point of time, their execution must have been nearly concurrent with the prints of the Planets. The inscription "AME DROIT," seen on the thigh of a youth in the print of the planet Venus, is repeated on the arm of a youth dancing with a maiden in the Otto print, No. 6, and there are many other similar incidents of resemblance. Their intended use is apparent from the devices and legends they bear. On the circular print (B. 17) in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris, of which there is a reproduction in the British Museum, a youth and maiden stand on either side, holding aloft an armillary sphere above a blank disc, with a scroll coiled over it, inscribed "AMOR . VVOLFE . EDOVE . FE . ИОННЕ . AMOR . ИОН-РВО ." ("love needs faith, and where faith is not, love cannot be"). In the small oval, the first of the series (B. 1) in the British Museum, of a young woman reclining on the ground, the same legend is engraved on a scroll held in her right hand, and carried across the upper side of the print; a copy of it is given in Ottley (353). The commencement of the same inscription, "AMOR VVOLFE", is again seen, in the group of Cupid and four women (B. 5), on the arm of the woman attacking Cupid with a sword. An interesting example is the circle (B. 12), with the lady's name "MARI-ETTA" on a scroll on her cloak: two escutcheons, to be filled in probably with the arms of a bride and bridegroom, for whose wedding the coffer, we may presume, was intended as a bridal present, are suspended on the branches of the trees rising on either side. The lady, on whose head is a large garland of flowers, is seated in a landscape, with an ermine, typical of purity, standing by her, whilst she is engaged caressing a unicorn, the emblem of chastity.

The twenty-four prints are by the hands of artificers practised in the knowledge of metal chasing; many are

designed with blank spaces for the insertion of coats of arms, and similar devices; the palli of the Medici, and other emblems, are drawn with a pen on some of them, evidently as directions to the goldsmith for their insertion, and the varied forms of the plaques bespeak their intended use, for the lids and sides of small boxes or coffers, for bridal and other presents.

The earliest accounts of the prints, written when they were in the possession of Pierre Ernest Otto of Leipsig, are given by Heineken in his "*Neüe Nachrichten*," 1786 (p. 381), and by Huber in his "*Manuel*," 1797-1808, by both of whom they are attributed to Finiguerra. Full details will be found in Bartsch (xiii., 142), and in Ottley (352), with a long discussion by the latter of Bartsch's views, and those he himself entertained in the matter, resulting in his ascribing their execution to Baldini. The designation, however, of their authorship is purely conjectural, according to the varied opinions of each successive writer, there being no corroborative evidence in support of their arguments.

The history of the prints is, that Baron von Stosch, who was a friend of the antiquarian Wincklemann, bought them at Florence; by inheritance from the Baron they passed to W. Müzel of Berlin, where, in 1783, they were offered for sale by auction, and bought by M. Otto of Leipsig. During the ensuing course of years, six were given away, or otherwise disposed of, and in 1852 the remaining eighteen were sold by auction at Leipsig, and the greater portion of them passed immediately after the sale to the British Museum, which is in possession of eighteen of the twenty-four prints. Passavant classified them amongst the general list of his attributions to Baldini and Botticelli.

The impression of the print of Tobias and the Angel (B., 20), now in the British Museum, which formerly belonged to the Abbé Zani, having been given to him by M. Otto, is stated by V^{te}. Delaborde, in his "*Gravure en Italie*" (p. 65), to bear an inscription at the foot, in the Abbé's

handwriting, "that we must regard Alessandro Filipepi called Botticelli as the author of the work, and the date of it a year or so later than 1460." Such inscription, however, no longer exists, the margin of the paper being cut to within a short space of the plate line. V^{te}. Delaborde adds the remark, that he considers Botticelli participated in the production of the engravings, incontestably in the designs of them, and that, from his being but thirteen years of age in 1460, the work was due to a later date,—of the period, more likely, about 1480.

The style of their drawing is essentially that of Filippo Lippi's teaching. Judging from the motive of the different designs, there is much apparent probability that Botticelli was associated in their production, during the period of his apprenticeship, with the guidance from the master he had the advantage of to aid him in their drawing, whilst his hand was still in the full exercise of the skill in metal chasing, which the previous years of his youth had been passed in the acquisition of. They illustrate, in their clever treatment, the relationship which existed between the goldsmiths and the painters in the middle of the fifteenth century.

The influence Filippo Lippi and his talented pupil exercised upon the advance that was taking place, in the utilization by the artists of the time, of the new medium for the delineation of their compositions, is seen in the series of fifteen subjects from the life of the Madonna and of Our Saviour, and of the Triumphs of Petrarch, presently to be described, which were completed and published, as we have every reason to assume, prior to Filippo Lippi's death in 1469.

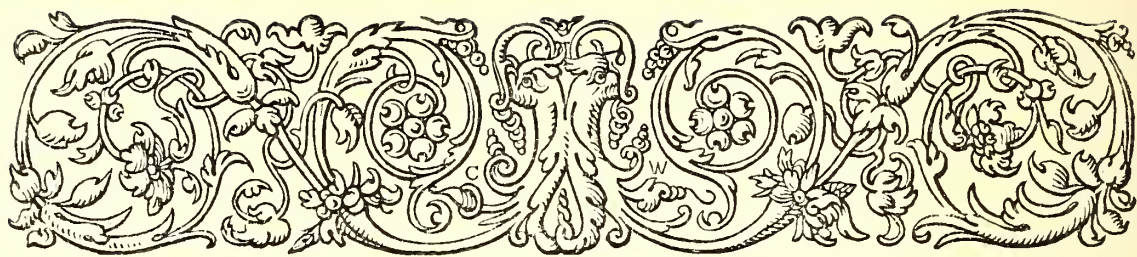
These prints of the early days of the art of engraving in Italy have an additional interest, beyond their intrinsic merit as examples of the proficiency of workmanship employed in their production, in the insight they give us into the habits and daily routine of life, and in their delineation of the varieties of costume, and of the occupations of the

different grades of society in Florence, in the middle of the fifteenth century. In the seven prints of the Planets, we commence with the pursuits of country life under "Luna," with the fowler watching his elaborate contrivances of decoys for bird-catching, whilst angling and net fishing are pursued with exactly the same tackle as still is made use of. "Saturn" presides over the agricultural occupations of ploughing, threshing, and tree-felling, represented in the distance, beyond a group of mendicants congregated at a prison gate. Under "Jupiter," hawking and hunting parties are delineated in the distance, and in the forepart of the view, a prince gives audience to some courtiers approaching him; and a group of Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch is at the side, seated, with books before them, in discussion, in an arched alcove. The horrors of war are depicted under the planet "Mars." "Sol" is the ruling influence over a gay assemblage, in the capacious courts of a palatial residence, where a royal personage is seated, directing the games and feats of strength his followers are engaged in. Under "Mercury" we have a view, in the centre of Florence, a goldsmith being at work plying his trade, and a painter on his scaffold, decorating with frescoes the front of a house; a musician playing on an organ by an open window, a sculptor, an astronomer, a clock-maker, and other artificers, and two scholars with a pile of books before them, are introduced into the crowded scene. In the last of the seven prints, under the planet "Venus," youths and maidens, conspicuous in the fanciful and costly vestments they are clad in, are occupied, dancing and love-making, in the gardens of a castellated palace.

The Otto prints are evidently impressions, taken as patterns, to be submitted for approval to members of the Court at Florence the goldsmith was working for, with pen drawings of the Medici palli, and other devices, sketched in for approval, in the blank spaces left for their insertion. They bring us into acquaintance with the intercourse that

existed between the artificer and his employer, and preserve an interesting record of the directions the former received for the completion of the pieces of plate the impressions were printed from.





CHAPTER VI.

THE TAROCCHI.



THE series, to which our attention has next to be directed, is of the fifty prints, known by the designation of the Tarocchi cards (B. xiii., 120). The dialect supposed to be observable in the spelling of some of the names, and the use of the letter "z" in "Zintilomo," have induced the suggestion of Venice as the place of their origin. But the characteristics of drawing, and the general treatment of the figures, are essentially Florentine, in the local peculiarities of dress and the fashion of wearing it. The prints afford an interesting illustration of the state of intellectual culture and the tone of thought and reflectiveness, which prevailed at the Court of the Medici, and the philosophical studies society in the city at the time was engaged in.

The popularity of these prints of the Tarocchi created the need, as had been the case with the prints of the Planets, for their repetition; of the series of the originals, as well as of the copies which were made of them, very few complete sets have been preserved. Examples of both are in the British Museum; the original series of fifty prints (B. xiii., 131, 18-67) is complete, nearly all of them being from the first state of the plates: of the copies (B. xiii., 120, 18-67), four are wanting:—Misero (1), Fameio (2), Imperator (9), and Primo Mobile (49). The prints consist of single

emblematical figures, numbered consecutively from 1 to 50, divided into five sections of ten each, marked with the letters E. D. C. B. A, the E of the series (B. 131), being replaced by an S in the series (B. 120); borders of a running pattern of coiled ribbon enclose them at the sides and top, finished with a four-leaved flower at the upper corners, the titles being inscribed in the lower margin; their average size is about seven inches high, by somewhat more than three inches wide. Many have the imprint of a small round spot, from the hole drilled in the plates by the engraver to fix them on his board whilst at work, and upon all of them there is the mark of the outer rim of the plate, showing that the press was employed for printing them: the ink used was of a pale bluish tone, and a slight bloom, most probably intentional, caused by the imperfect wiping of the plate, remains upon the paper. Nothing appears to be known of the reproductions north of Tuscany, both at Bologna and Venice, said to have been made of them.

Bartsch's classification has to be reversed; the set lettered E. D. C. B. A (B. xiii., 131, 18-67) is manifestly the first in order of production, and very materially so in quality; the set lettered S. D. C. B. A. (B. xiii., 120, 18-67), copied from it, is hard and inartistic in workmanship, and by a far less skilful engraver.

The most perfect series of the originals (B. 131), formerly in the Seratti collection, now belongs to Mr. Malcolm of Poltalloch, having been bought by him, at the sale in Paris of the collection of the late M. Galichon in 1875. The impressions, uniform in freshness of colour, have their margins entire, and they are preserved in an antique binding, apparently of the time of their first issue.

According to the generally-received opinion, one engraver only was employed in their production: there is however considerable difference in the designs, Fameio, Chavalier, Imperator, Polimnia, Jupiter, Ottava Spera, for example, being noticeably superior to the mannered ex-

pression of Caliope, Talia, Erato, and Melpomene, of the Muses, and of Laica, Forteza, and some other subjects. The prints are all very delicately finished, with minute and patient exactness ; the formal treatment of the hands, the set shapes of the trees, and other peculiarities, suggest that a goldsmith, dependent upon the drawings of others to work from, was the engraver. The designation of playing-cards, which had generally been accepted as the correct indication of their intended use, the same being retained by Passavant, has but recently been pronounced to be erroneous, and the higher definition has been given to the prints of a pictured handbook of moral teaching, descriptive of human life, and of the spiritual and mundane agencies, which, according to the philosophy of the fifteenth century, were the active influences in its guidance. M. Galichon first directed his attention to their critical examination : he published in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (ix., 143) an essay in elucidation of the motive, embodied in the fifty subjects the series is composed of, with an exposition of the code of moral and religious instruction they were intended to illustrate. The condition of the set he had under consideration, printed upon thin paper, and bound as a book, was strongly corroborative of the deductions he drew of the purpose they were designed for ; and some further information confirmatory of M. Galichon's arguments was added by M. Kolloff, in his article upon Baldini.

The prints are divided into five cycles of ten each, each cycle being marked by one of the first five letters of the alphabet, in inverted order. Commencing at the letter E, the ranks of society are represented,—first, by the outcast from it, destitute of clothes to shelter him from the cold, or from the dogs that tear his flesh. Progressing through the various grades of Servant, Artisan, Merchant, Gentleman, and Knight, followed by Doge, King, and Emperor, man is depicted in the last of the ten as Pope, the highest position humanity could attain to.

The cycle D, which follows in succession, illustrates the enjoyment derivable from the cultivation of the pleasures of the senses, in the representation of the nine Muses, with Apollo at their head, emblematical of the qualifications they were endowed with, for ministering to their gratification. The nine Muses, called the Pierides, from their supposed birth on Mount Pierus, were the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne, their parentage by some writers being given to Pierus and Antiope. According to Plutarch, the mythological account transmitted from antiquity is, that they presided over the harmony of the spheres, eight of them abiding in the eight spheres of Heaven, whilst the ninth, Thalia, who alone is represented without a planetary disc, and seated on the ground with ivy growing around her, occupies the space beneath the Moon. The eight super-terrestrials, according to Marcianus Capella, maintain the harmonious relationship between the planets and the heavenly bodies, Urania being attached to the Sidereal Heaven, Calliope to Mercury, Terpsichore to Venus, Erato to Mars, Polyhymnia to Saturn, Melpomene to Sol, Euterpe to Jupiter, and Clio to Luna. Thalia, because the swan which carried her was unable to support the burden, was conveyed back to earth and remained there. Apollo is the tenth figure represented, completing and directing the cycle.

In the group next in order, classified under the letter c, man is carried forward, satiated with the pleasure derived merely from the indulgence of the senses, and devoting himself to the pursuit of the Arts and Sciences, which in the middle ages were divided into the seven classes of Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric, Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astrology; the first three were called the Trivium, and the last four the Quadrivium, to which, in the period of the Renaissance, were added Poetry, Philosophy, and Divinity, raising the number to ten. They are all in the guise of women, varied in age, of dignified and handsome countenance, draped in long robes and mantles.

Man is attracted by higher aspirations in the fourth cycle, and passes under the influence of the virtues, described in the Book of Wisdom,—the four cardinal virtues, of Prudence, Justice, Moderation, and Fortitude, to which are joined the three Christian virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity: the figures are distinguished by their customary attributes, or by a symbolical animal. The three additions wherewith the cycle of ten is completed—Iliacos, Chronicos, and Cosmicos—are somewhat difficult of explanation, in their association with the Virtues: Iliacos, in the strength of manhood, with crisp curled hair, emblematical of the Sun, from its Greek name *Ηλιαχος*, stands, holding in his extended hand a disc representative of the Sun in full orb, surrounded by rays of light; Cosmos, as a youth, with luxuriant hair trimmed across his forehead, bears a globe, half celestial, half terrestrial, emblematical of the World; and the tenth figure, Chronicos, of handsome countenance, with short curls round his brow, and wings on his shoulders, sustains in his right hand a dragon with coiled tail, the point being in its mouth, emblematical of Eternity.

The fifth and last cycle fully negatives the supposition, that any such use of the Tarocchi as that of playing-cards could have been contemplated. It embodies the Ptolemaic system of the Heavens, which had not then been superseded, and, besides the Seven Planets in their order, comprises the three celestial spheres lying beyond the planets: the Octava Spera, that of the fixed stars; the Primo Mobile, from whence the power of revolving proceeds to the other spheres; ending with Prima Causa, the Empyrean, where is God's eternal seat of rest.

Duchesne, in his "*Voyage d'un Iconophile*" (p. 190), states that the numerals 14085 at the foot of the tablet held by Arithmetica, in the series of copies (B. xiii., 120), designate 1485, as the year of the engraving, the "o" in the centre being merely inserted to fill up the space in the bottom line. Passavant accepts the figures as the date,

without comment, and Dr. Wiltshire apparently puts the same interpretation upon them. Kolloff describes the tablet as being similar to that which was introduced by Albert Dürer in the print of "Melencolia" (B. vii., 74), where the numerals are inserted in their proper position, representing, in each direction, a total of 16; but he considers that the Italian engraver was unacquainted with their purpose and correct arrangement, and consequently misplaced them, and that in fact they have nothing to do with any intended date. These copies may be of a time, corresponding with the interpretation put upon the numerals, but the original prints belong to a period, prior by many years, to 1485. Adopting M. Galichon's language, M. Kolloff remarks, that the exceeding grace and elegance of the figures, though occasionally a little mannered, is always attractive: the type of the pleasing formal faces, and of the dignified male heads, the preference for profile, the frequent delicacy of drawing of the hands and feet, and the tasteful cast of the drapery, are indubitable signs of Florentine art. It was contended by Cicognara, who was interested in the endeavour to identify these early prints with the fabrications, in operation in Venice, of the imitations of the Florentine nielli, that they were of Venetian workmanship, from the use of the local dialect in the spelling "Zintilomo."

There is no contemporary example of the engraver's skill, wherewith the original series of the Tarocchi are in direct correspondence, except that in the style of their cutting they are somewhat in accord with the first set of the Planets; the pose of the figures, the trim of the hair, and the peculiarities of the vestments they are clad in, strongly support the very generally accepted opinion that Florence was the city of their production.

In "A Descriptive Catalogue of Playing and other Cards in the British Museum: by W. H. Willshire, M.D.: Printed by order of the Trustees 1876," the author writes,

of the Tarocchi cards (p. 19), that : “ The origin of the word tarot, or tarots, has been much canvassed. Some have derived it from Egyptian dialects ; others have regarded it as springing from the term tarotée, which was applied to cards diapered or marked on the backs with lines crossing lozenge-wise, or dotted diagonally with small spots, as such cards generally were. They were also occasionally bordered with a silver margin, on which was represented a spiral or tortuous band, formed by similar dots or points. This band, being likened to a *tare*, an ‘ espèce de gaufrure produite par de petites trous piqués et alignés en compartements,’ the cards possessing it were called tarots. According to Menestrier, *tare* signifies, properly, a hole—*defaut*, *dechet*, *tache*, *trou*, derived from the Greek *τρειν*, to bore. The dots, points, &c. in the ornamentation alluded to, simulating little hollows, the cards having them were called tarots, or were said to be *tarotées*. ‘ Tarots ’ has been said also to have been derived from *tarocchi* or *tarocchino*, which is probably the name of a game played with tarots combined with numerals, some of the latter being suppressed. The name of the game having been applied to the cards with which it was played, they were hence called ‘ tarocchi cards.’ ”

From an essay contributed by V^{te}. Delaborde to the “ Gazette des Beaux Arts ” for 1873 (vol. vii.) upon “ La Gravure Florentine au xv siècle,” the following extract is taken :—

“ Notwithstanding the attribution to Venice or Padua, upon the strength of some inscriptions in the Venetian dialect, the Florentine taste and style (in the Tarocchi cards) are very apparent. Could any artist, except a Florentine, have drawn such figures as ‘ Merchadante,’ ‘ Chavalier,’ ‘ Clio,’ and ‘ Rhetorica,’ and, above all, the two called ‘ Astrologia ’ and ‘ Primo Mobile ? ’ In the lines of the face, as well as in every detail down to the smallest fold of drapery, they are charming delineations of naturalism, as

it was understood by the followers of Masaccio, combined with a sentiment of ideality, analogous to that Botticelli derived his inspiration from. The same regularity and finish does not prevail in all of them : incorrectness of drawing and errors of proportion render it difficult to impute, to the able artist of the 'Astrologia,' the faults committed by the draughtsman of 'Caliope,' 'Euterpe,' and 'Talia.' The drawings, probably, or rather, we should say, undoubtedly, were supplied to the engraver by different hands. The harmony of the series is, in fact, somewhat compromised by the inferiority of talent seen in several, as in the greater part of the Muses, for example, whilst many of the designs are due, we think, to the pencil of Botticelli. Admitting that the drawings of the Tarocchi are designed by different hands, there is no doubt we are entirely justified in attributing the production upon the copper of all of them to the same engraver. From the first to the last plate, the short strokes they uniformly are worked with—either horizontally or obliquely—seldom have any cross-hatching introduced, the lines being generally, as they abut on the blank spaces, abruptly stopped. The slight incision made upon the metal, in the semblance, somewhat, of a soft down, induces, rather than determines, the effect obtained, and the tenderness of handling causes no failure of expression, either in its treatment of the simplicity of nature, or where Saturn, Jupiter, or Mars have to be represented. The conclusion we arrive at is,—that the Tarocchi are the result of no joint enterprise, but must be accredited to one artificer reliant on his own capability to complete them. Nothing further, probably, will be discovered, and we must be contented to remain in ignorance of the name of the engraver. Authors and amateurs may choose by turns the names, erroneously in our opinion, of Finiguerra and Mantegna, or with less improbability, of Baccio Baldini. It is sufficient to have established their Florentine origin ; and in our enjoyment of these precious gems of the infancy of en-

graving,¹ we must not lessen the admiration of such unequivocal examples of beauty and skill, through regret for an absent signature, or the failure of our researches."

The cutting of the plates of the Tarocchi was effected with a thinly-pointed graver, a broader one being occasionally resorted to for the outlines of the figures, but never heavily incised, and cross-hatching was only occasionally used for the shadows, which are generally drawn in short lines in the same direction, either obliquely or horizontally, terminating suddenly on approaching the verge of the clear spaces. The object evidently was, as far as practicable, to preserve the appearance of the original drawings, and the effect was materially aided by the pale tinted ink employed; being worked so lightly, they were capable of rendering an extremely limited number of impressions, as the delicate cutting of the shading rapidly became exhausted.

The second set is rather smaller in size, and has many slight variations of composition; but the subjects are all adapted from the previous series, the arrangement and delineation of the figures being identical. An alteration is made, by the substitution of "s" for "E" as the first of the five denominating letters. Bartsch classified this, the second set, as precedent in order, and as being the originals the others were copied from; but they are very inferior in their artistic qualities and expression, and a far less intelligent hand was employed upon their engraving: the outlines are stiff and mechanical, and the shadows harsh and faulty in their gradation.

¹ Albert Dürer's appreciation of the Tarocchi, as of many other of these early Italian prints, is seen in copies by his hand of numbers 6, 7, 10, 16, 23, 28, 32, 46, and 49 in the British Museum, several being heightened with colour.



CHAPTER VII.

THE PROPHETS AND SIBYLS.



THE prints of the Prophets and Sibyls, amongst the different series issued, in these early days, at Florence, are of a somewhat later period.

In their enlarged freedom of drawing, and the readier skill in the use of the burin they bear the evidence of, they clearly are of an artist's workmanship, engraved upon the copper by the hand that designed them, and sustain the opinion advanced as to their authorship, that Botticelli was the engraver of them. Representations of the Prophets and Sibyls, the interpretation of whose prophecies held a prominent position in Ecclesiastical history, in their applied illustration of Christian teaching, are of frequent recurrence in the paintings, and the literature of the time.

THE PROPHETS.

The Prophets are delineated in a series of twenty-four prints, comprising the four greater, and nine other of the canonical prophets, with the addition of thirteen of the prophets and patriarchs, who were the precursors of Our Saviour, and prophesied and prefigured his advent. The prints have been discussed, with much diversity of criticism, both as to the artists who made the designs, and the engravers who executed them.

Bartsch gives the account of two separate series, his descriptions being taken from examples in the Imperial collection at Vienna. The first, in numerical order, in his lists (B. xiii., 164, 1-24), he pronounces to be the originals, classifying them amongst the earliest works of Baccio Baldini, the peculiarities in the formation of the letters being one of the arguments adduced by him, to support the assigned priority of their production. There is strong inferential evidence that this set of the Prophets (B. xiii., 164, 1-24) was designed and engraved by Botticelli.¹

Ottley (p. 400) considered they were "engraved after designs made by Botticelli, at an early period of his life,—probably not later than between 1460 and 1470,—and that from the incorrectness of drawing in the hands of most of the figures, the only naked parts except the faces that are seen, there appears to be every fair ground for placing them amongst the first productions of Baldini."

Kolloff adopts a suggestion, advanced by Passavant (i., 198), that the Florentine engraver was influenced by the master of 1466, and quotes in detail some problematical points of agreement between his prints of the Apostles, and those of the prophets. It will be seen on comparison the resemblance is so extremely slight, that it is very doubtful whether the series of the Apostles by the German master was known to the Florentine engraver.

In considering the date of the prints of the Prophets, and the correctness of their ascription to Botticelli, we have to bear in mind that he was born in 1447. Their fine drawing, and the artistic excellence and maturity of thought we have in the engravings, raise the question, whether the prints could have been produced by him, considering that the time of their execution cannot be regarded as much later than 1470. The very early period at which we know the educa-

¹ Botticelli was born in 1447: Passavant's statement (v., 27) that 1457 was the year of his birth is evidently a misprint.

tion of youth in the fifteenth century was commenced, and pursued with steady diligence of study, and the knowledge and reflectiveness wherewith Botticelli, who, as Vasari states (iii., 309) "was of great shrewdness" in his boyish days, is accredited, coupled with the skilled ability he had attained during his apprenticeship as a metal chaser, support the opinion that he was the engraver of the twenty-four prints of the first set of the Prophets (B. xiii., 164, 1-24).

Both sets of the Prophets are represented in the British Museum; of the set ascribed by Bartsch to Baldini (B. xiii., 164, 1-24) there are impressions of but three, in the first state, with the verses in the margin at the foot,—viz., of the Prophets, Baruch (11), Joel (14), and Agabus (20). Passavant (v., 29) writes that, according to Zani the letters "b A" can easily be distinguished in the margin of the print of the Prophet Zacharias (21), against the commencement of the third line of the verses at the foot, and that they prove Alessandro Botticelli was the engraver of them, in their being the initial letters of his name. Kolloff remarks that if the letters exist, which he states he had been unable to discover on three impressions he had examined, they might have been placed there to direct attention to corrections made in the text of the verses, the word "MOI" having been struck through in the second line, and "OGNE," in the third line, having been corrected to "OGNI."

The plates of the entire series were afterwards reduced in size, by the removal from all of them of the lower margins containing the verses, and the character of the prints was totally altered, by their being heavily reworked, the bright pencilling of their first state being changed to dark burred work, bringing them into resemblance with the nineteen illustrations, engraved by Baldini for the "*Divina Comedia*." The set in the British Museum, in the late state of the prints, is nearly complete, wanting only two at the end, Joshua (23), and Isaiah (24); the prints in this condition are not uncommon, owing to the plates having been pre-

served, and submitted to the repeated process of reworking, down to the present century, and the plates probably are still in existence.

The three impressions of this series, in their first state, in the British Museum collection, enable us to form an estimate of the correctness of their attribution to Botticelli.

The second series (B. xiii., 169, 1-24) is complete, in the British Museum, with the exception of two, the prints of the Prophets Amos (15) and Obadiah (16), and the impressions are nearly all from the first state of the plates, printed upon a fine thin paper, with a pale bluish ink, somewhat similar to that used for printing the Tarocchi. They are for the most part uninjured in condition, except that they are cut at the sides, and inlaid in slight margins. The following water-marks occur upon the paper :—a cross in a circle, a long pointed spear, a Greek cross in a circle, and the three hills of Rome surmounted by a cross.

Passavant (v., p. 29) apparently does not seem to have had the opportunity of examining this second set. He gives no description of the variations between the two sets except in the general, and, in many instances, incorrect remark, that the ends of the clouds the Prophets are seated upon, pointed in the originals, are rounded in the copies. Kolloff, in his account, tells us (p. 609) he was acquainted with one only, the Prophet Amos, of this second set.

Numerous differences exist between them, several of the figures being materially altered. The costume, in the fashion of many of the robes, is changed, but in both series an Oriental style prevails in the turbans and massive Eastern head-dresses. The broader character of drawing, and the more life-like rendering of the expression of the faces, support the correctness of Bartsch's selection of the series (B. xiii., 164, 1-24) as the originals. Considerable stress has been laid upon the form of the letters of the inscriptions of the eight verses in the margins, as an argument for priority, which is commented upon by Kolloff in his account

of them. The intended sense of the verses throughout both series is the same, but the words and letters it is expressed with are much varied, as will be seen in the following instances, taken from the impressions in the British Museum.

The faults of orthography in the letterpress are difficult of explanation. The descriptions seem to have been added after the engraving was finished. The inverted *z* and the *q* for *q* in the first set are, in the second, exchanged for the usual form of those letters.

The following lines, the three last of the inscription at the foot of the print of the Prophet Baruch (B. 166, 11),

CONDOTTO PERPIGLIARVMANITADE
ETTVTTI QVEGLI CHE 2ARANNO DI2R2I
RIDVTTI FIEN NELVER CONGLI 2VAVER2I

are altered in the print of the same Prophet (B. 170, 11) to

CONDOCTO PERPIGLARE HVMANITATE
ET TVTTI QVELLI CHE SARAN DISPERSI
PER LVIAL VERO BEN SARAN CONVERSI

The third and the fifth lines at the foot of the print of the Prophet Joel (B. 166, 14),

CCHECERTO CIRALLEGRIAMO ANCHORNOI
EDI 2ION FIGLA NEGLI 2PIRITI TVOI

are altered in the print of the same Prophet (B. 171, 14) to

ECCOCHELIETI SIĀFACTIANCORNIOI
OFIGLIA DISIONGLESPIRTITVOI

And the first and second lines at the foot of the print of the Prophet Haggai (B. 166, 20),

ECIELI 2ON **R** GRANDI E2IL LOR **M**ALTVRA
ECREDO PATORIRA PRE2TAMENTE

are altered in the print of the same Prophet (B. 171, 20) to

ECIEL SON GRANDI E SIMILLOR NATVRA
ET PARTORIRA CREDO PRESTAMENTE.

THE SIBYLS.

The Sibyls, from a long antecedent period, were frequently introduced in sacred art, owing to the idea which had become disseminated, that they had foretold the coming of Our Saviour, and the narratives connecting them with Christianity were extremely popular. The representations of them comprise the ten enumerated by Ælian, with the addition of the Sibyls Agrippa and Europa, who, in later years, were added to the list, increasing it to twelve in number. They correspond, in the character of their engraving, with the prints of the Prophets, and from the water-marks of the paper, and other circumstances, they were evidently executed about the same period of time. A fine set of the series (B. xiii., 172, 25-36), belonging to Mr. Malcolm of Poltallock, was bound in a volume, "*Opuscula Philippi de Barberiis*," published at Rome in 1481, illustrated with rude woodcuts, comprising, amongst them, one of the Emperor Augustus on his knees, with his crown at his feet, looking upwards at a vision in the air of the Madonna with the Infant Saviour, to which the Tiburtine Sibyl at his side directs his attention.

At the foot of each of the twelve prints, in the lower margin, are eight verses, the same in character as the verses inscribed beneath the prints of the Prophets, referable to the assumed prophetic announcement by the Sibyl of Our Saviour's advent; the legend on the scroll, or in the space by the side of the figure of the Sibyl, is of similar purport. The composition of the verses and accompanying legends is for the most part attributable to ecclesiastical authorship, coeval with the date of the engravings. On the book held by the Cumæan Sibyl is an inscription of the prophecy, said to have been uttered by her on the shore of Lake Avernus, preserved in the following passage at the commencement of Virgil's fourth Eclogue:—

"Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas ;
 Magnus ab integro seclorum nascitur ordo.
Jam redit et Virgo : redeunt Saturnia regna :
Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto.
 Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
 Desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
 Casta fave Lucina."

The prophecy, amongst numerous explanations, has been considered to relate to the birth of Germanicus. It is of much interest, from the interpretation given to it, as a prediction of the coming of Christ upon earth. The Eclogue abounds with passages traceable to Isaiah, and is throughout remarkable, in the appositeness of its language to the prefigurement of the Christian dispensation.

According to Bartsch, there are three sets of the twelve figures of the Sibyls by Italian engravers of the fifteenth century : the first in order of sequence in his arrangement, is classified amongst the early anonymous Italian masters (B. xiii., 91, 9-20); the series is complete in the British Museum, the impressions, with one exception, being all from the first state of the plates, on fine paper, the water-marks upon it being of the fingers of a hand, a ducal crown in a circle, and a spread eagle. They are accompanied by several duplicates, in later states, not previously described, showing in some instances considerable alterations. The Cumæan Sibyl (15) belonging to this, the set first described by Bartsch, in a seated position with rays of light around, was missing in the series from which he took his description, and in its place a print was substituted from the set second in his enumeration, where the Sibyl is differently represented seated on a bench.¹

The prints of this the series first described by Bartsch (B. xiii., 91, 9-20) are refined and delicate in their drawing,

¹ An impression of this substituted print of Bartsch will be found in its proper place in the second set (B. xiii., 95, 21-32) in the British Museum collection.

the features in all of them being of young women, handsome of countenance, of staid and earnest passionless expression. The accessories, the vestments especially, are delineated with studied correctness, and the skilfulness of their workmanship is not surpassed by that of any of the early Florentine prints, for in Florence there can be no question they were engraved. The paper is similar to that used for the set of the Prophets (B. xiii., 169) in the British Museum, and they are printed with the same bluish ink.

Of the set second in Bartsch's classification (B. xiii., 95, 21-32) there are in the British Museum impressions only of the Sibyls Chimicha (24), Cumana (27), and Agrippa (32): little was known by Bartsch or Passavant of this second set, and it is difficult to explain distinctly the discrepancies in their descriptions, judging by the accounts they give of them. The particulars specified by Bartsch are vague and imperfect, and no subsequent writer supplies explanatory information. Bartsch in his account informs us that he had seen only six of the prints; of these six, so far as an opinion can be formed from the detail he supplies, four were but impressions, in late states, from the re-worked plates of the Sibyls Persica, Libica, Hellespontica, and Samia of the set first previously described (B. xiii., 91, 9-20): they will be found in their re-engraved state, arranged in their right places, in the British Museum, as later states of those prints. The remaining two of the six, which Bartsch had seen and gives particulars of, are the same prints as those of the Sibyls Chimicha (B. xiii., 97, 24) and Agrippa (B. xiii., 98, 32) which are in the British Museum. The print of the Sibyl Cumana (B. xiii., 97, 27) in the British Museum, corresponds with the print placed, as before mentioned, by Bartsch with the set (B. xiii., 91, 9-20) first described by him, in substitution of the print of the same Sibyl, which in that set was wanting: it is engraved by the same hand as the Sibyls Chimicha (B. xiii., 97, 24) and Agrippa (B. xiii., 98, 32) in the British Museum.

Passavant's account (v., p. 8) is confusing and incorrect; he does not inform us where are the examples he writes about. He states that five of the prints (B. xiii., 95, 21-32) are reproductions from retouched plates of the previous set, and that "the others are new compositions, very different from the first, especially in respect of design"; but his only additions to Bartsch's descriptions are, that the head of the Delphic Sibyl (23) is dressed with a garland instead of a cap,¹ and that there are no wings on the head-dress (which is correct) of the Sibyl Chimicha (24), but incorrectly that the second h in her name is omitted; and that in the verses to the Sibyl Hellespontica (26), the spelling of the second word in the first line, "MIE," in the original, is changed in the copy to "MIA." All the information, derived from Bartsch or Passavant, respecting this second set (B. xiii., 95, 21-32), with the exception of this change of spelling in the verses to the Sibyl Hellespontica, is in fact limited to the description of prints similar to the three of the set which are in the British Museum. Passavant increased the perplexity by stating (v., p. 9) that there appeared to be still another set of copies, of which he had found but two, the Sibyls Hellespontica (14) and Tiburtina (18). His descriptions, he tells us, are taken from impressions of the prints in the British Museum collection. It will be found, on their examination, that they are only late impressions from the re-worked plates of the prints of those Sibyls in the set (B. xiii., 91, 9-20). In the absence, however, of the descriptions of the prints comprised in the catalogue these particulars were written for, the prints themselves must be referred to, to arrive at an understanding of the discrepancies between them.

¹ This evidently is an impression of a late state of the Delphic Sibyl of the first series (B., 11), the cap having been burnished out, and a jewelled fillet substituted. An impression of the print in this late state is in the British Museum.

Kolloff, in his account, adopted from that of Bartsch, informs us that he was acquainted with but five of these copies (B. xiii., 95, 21-32), the Samian Sibyl in the broad manner of Baldini, and the Sibyls Persica, Cumana, Phrygia, and Europa, stating that in composition they are totally different from the prints in the so-called Baldini series (B. xiii., 172, 25-36); but in what respect they differ, or where the examples he writes about are to be seen, he does not inform us.

The third series described by Bartsch (xiii., 172, 25-36), is arranged by him amongst the works of Baccio Baldini. Prints of two only are in the British Museum collection,—of the Sybils Delphica (27), and Hellespontica (30), both weak in impression. A detailed account, however, of the entire series is appended to the catalogue in the British Museum taken from Mr. Malcolm's very fine and complete set.

There is a great and distinctive contrast in the representative character of the figures. The series (B. xiii., 91, 9-20) we have already commented upon. The difference between them, and this the series third in order in Bartsch's classification (B. xiii., 172, 25-36), is very considerable; the vestments, simple in the first (B. 9-20), are of a more elaborate and decorated character in the third (B. 25-36). The details of drawing and general treatment, with the massive Turkish head-dresses and Oriental costume, the sabre of the Erythean Sibyl, instead of the straight Roman sword, and other accessories, and the older faces with their stern severity, may account for the opinion which has been advanced, that Bartsch's ascription of the prints to Baldini is erroneous, and that they are of Venetian origin. The full text of the verses, with their peculiar spelling and varied wording, retaining the errors and the form of the letters, is set out in the British Museum catalogue.

The third and fourth lines of the verses, at the foot of the Delphic Sibyl, in this the so-called Baldini series, have

inscribed in the margin against them the letters B A, which Passavant interpreted to be the indication of the name of Alessandro Botticelli. Upon the strength of this interpretation of the letters, and of the discovery he mentions he had made, of the same letters, by the side of the inscription at the foot of the print of the Prophet Zacharias, previously referred to, Passavant (v., p. 28) pronounced the prints of the Prophets and Sibyls to be by the hand of Alessandro Botticelli.

Kolloff, in the preface to his article on Baldini, furnishes a different solution of the use of the letters in the margin of the verses to the Delphic Sibyl (B. 25-36). He discusses the question, to prove there is no evidence of any of the early engravers having marked their works in the manner indicated by Passavant, and in his description of the print he explains that the letters were merely used to point out an error in the position of the lines, and that a reversal of the third and fourth lines was requisite; the proposed correction is shown in the following transcript of the inscription:

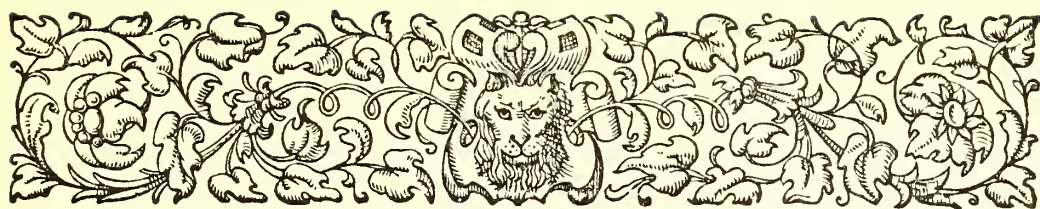
NA2CETVR. PROPHETA E VIRGINE AB29VE. HVMANA CORRVTIONE.
 NONE DAE2ER LENTA MATRA^N9VILLA
 AVERTALOPERA ECHON2IDERARE
 B DOVEI PROFETA GRANDE AINCHARNARE
 A LAVENIMENTO CHE ALTA VILLA
 NELVENTRE VERGINAL DVMANANCILLA
 2AN2A CONGIUNTO DVOM MORTAL2AFARE
 ECCHOTALCHO2A FIE 2OPRA NATVRA
 FATTA PER CHVEL CHEPVO CHE IDIO DARA.¹

¹ We add an attempted translation of the verses:—

She is not slow (of belief) but calm
 In the contemplation of the occurrence
 In the high city of such a work
 As the incarnation of the great prophet
 In the virgin womb of a human maid,
 Without the conjunction of mortal man.
 Behold a thing in itself supernatural
 Effected by the Omnipotent empowered of God.

The capital letter A, according to Kolloff's explanation, is placed in the margin against the fourth line to direct that it should be read in precedence of the third line, against which stands the small letter b:—it will be seen that this transposition of the third and fourth lines restores the sense of the passage, and that Kolloff's explanation of the use of the two indicatory letters is correct. On referring to the verses at the foot of the Delphic Sibyl in the first series (B. xiii., 91, 9-20), which are given in full in the British Museum catalogue, Kolloff's argument will be found confirmed, by the two corresponding lines in that print: they are expressed in varied words, but they are in the order which the required change, in the third and fourth lines of the print of the Delphic Sibyl, in the series (B. xiii., 172, 25-36) would place them in.





CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY FLORENTINE PRINTS.



THE new industry which had been created rapidly became utilized by the goldsmiths and by the painters their contemporaries. A large proportion of the first examples of their workmanship, owing to their perishable nature, have disappeared : many of those remaining are unique in impression, and nearly all are of great rarity : we are indebted to the establishment, in modern times, of national libraries and museums, for the preservation of many of the early products of the engraver's art from the neglect and loss which might have befallen them, had they remained subject only to the fickleness of taste all private collections are dependent upon.

Prior to the print of the "Gladiators" by Antonio del Pollajuolo, to which he added the inscription, "OPVS ANTONII POLLAIOLI FLORENTINI," there is no similar evidence of authorship to be found upon a single specimen of the early Italian engravings, save the mark of an initial letter or letters in some few instances. The erroneous reading of the letters b A in the margins of the inscriptions at the foot of the Prophet Zacharias (P. v., 28), and of the Delphic Sibyl (P. v., 28), interpreted by Passavant to be the initial letters of Alessandro Botticelli's name, has previously been explained.

The creation of the imaginary niellateur "Peregrini,"

out of the monogram wherewith some of the prints of the anonymous master P of Bartsch (B. xiii., 205) are marked, the letters "O.P.D.C" being also upon two of his prints, and the disquisitions written by Duchesne, Cicognara, and Passavant upon the prints, which in the first quarter of the present century were produced at Venice, and ascribed to "Peregrini," have been previously discussed. The creation was recently amplified, by an English writer upon art, into enlarged vitality, accompanied with further particulars respecting the personality of "Peregrini," and his promotion to the distinction of being the engraver of the illustrations, in 1499, of the "*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*," with the suggestion that he "must in later life have taken up his abode in Venice, and become associated with Aldus Manutius, Gregorius, and other printers, in that active age of typography."

In proceeding with the examination of the anonymous Italian prints of the fifteenth century, we have scarcely a clue to guide us as to the engravers of them. Any attempt to define the schools or particular localities they belong to, is simply impracticable. Several of the prints, in their drawing and in their engraving, are inferior in quality, and some few of them evidently may be regarded as belonging to the sixteenth, rather than to the fifteenth century. The opinions alternately pronounced upon them, beginning with those of Bartsch, and continued, with varied interpretation, by each successive writer, prove how hopeless is the attempt to decide authoritatively upon their authorship. The one opinion that can be relied on respecting them is, that they were for the most part engraved in Florence; and their classification under one general alphabetical arrangement, which alone can be made with any approach to practical usefulness, affords facility for reference for their critical examination and comparison.

One of the earliest examples, is the rare print, from two plates, of Our Lord at Supper with His Disciples (P. v., 194), corresponding with the fresco, discovered in 1845, on

the wall of the refectory of the convent of S. Onofrio in Florence. Judging from its archaic treatment, and the fixedness of gaze in the eyes and features, the print is evidently due to the early days of the exercise of the art of engraving. The Saviour and His disciples are seated at a long table, the ends of which are turned to the front; a decorated screen is behind them, with their names on the upper part of it, at the back of their heads: the words "SANTISSIMVS . IESSVS" are by the head of the Saviour, who occupies the centre place at the table, with S. John reclining on His breast. Judas, of whose name there is no inscription, is seated, apart from the rest, on a stool in front of the Saviour, holding the bag, with the thirty pieces of silver, by his side in his left hand.

The scene is in an enclosed chamber, square at the top, with a range of nine small open arches, and richly decorated pillars, surmounted by a frieze extending across the print: upon the frieze there is an ornamentation of eagles with expanded wings, the different emblems of the Passion being introduced between them: windows are in the wall above. The print, although elaborate in workmanship, is rude in its cutting, and differs from any known Florentine example of the time. In a bas-relief, at the left end of the bench whereon the Apostles are seated, the attendant of a trooper carries a scroll, marked with some letters, interpreted by Passavant to be "LVG . INO," in reverse.

Much interest attaches to the print, from the differences in detail observable between it, and the fresco in the convent of S. Onofrio it is in correspondence with. Instead of the wall of an enclosed chamber, as seen in the print, the background of the fresco is formed, in the centre, in a wide arch, Our Saviour's Agony in the garden being represented in the open space of it. According to the modern engravings made of the fresco, it has of late years been more than once repainted. On the discovery of the fresco in 1845, it was called a painting by Raphael, and a small engraving,

delicately executed, was published in the following year, by Messrs. Goupil of Paris, with “Raphael pinxt” in the lower left corner. The ascription of the fresco to Raphael was subsequently pronounced to be erroneous, the treatment being deemed to be far more Peruginesque in its character. An account is given by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their “History of Painting in Italy” (iii., 247), of the repaintings the fresco has undergone, in the style neither of Raphael or Perugino, accompanied by an outline engraving of it “in its present condition.”

The circumstances respecting Perugino ;—of his birth in 1446, and his arrival in Florence not much antecedent to 1480, render it doubtful whether he could have been employed upon the fresco. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle write of the print: “Was it a copy of the original at S. Onofrio, which some Peruginesques repainted at a later period, under orders from Perugino, to whom the commission had been entrusted?” The present state of the fresco, however, is due to far more recent workmanship, as we learn from the difference of detail, seen in the print of it, published by Messrs. Goupil in 1846, and in the outline print, wherewith the account, published by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle in 1866, is accompanied.

The only known complete impression of the early Florentine engraving is in the Ducal collection at Gotha: the right-hand portion of it, extending to the figure of Judas, is in the British Museum.¹

Far higher refinement of manner was speedily brought into operation, in the execution of their prints, by the painter-engravers of Florence. One of the first of their productions, in these days of the commencement of the art of engraving, is the representation, on one plate, of the final inci-

¹ In the “Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen” for 1884 there is an article by Dr. Schmarsow accompanied by a fac-simile of the engraving at Gotha, in which he ascribes the fresco to Perugino, painted in his eighteenth year.

dents of Our Saviour's Passion (P. v., 68, 64). In the lower portion of the print, from the gateway of a massive building on the right, whereon the first five letters of Jerusalem are inscribed, the procession to Calvary comes forth with the Saviour in the centre, sinking under the weight of the Cross, preceded by the two thieves, and followed by the weeping Madonna and her attendants : the procession is directed to the opposite side, and passes away through a ravine of rock, from which it emerges to the upper division of the scene. In this upper portion of the print the Crucified Saviour is in the centre, a cross being on the right, to which one of the thieves is being lifted up the steps of a ladder propped against it; at the foot of the ladder an official is seated, writing an order for the execution of the other thief, who, with bound arms, stands before him ; his cross is on the left, on the other side of the Saviour. Various groups are introduced, the Madonna and an attendant, with S. John, being seated on the face of the hill on the left. The only known impression of the print came from the Seratti collection, and is now in the British Museum ; although reduced to an outline, we see from its workmanship that the date is concurrent with the first set of the Planets, and that it was executed by the engraver of them. A reproduction of the print is in Ottley's series of fac-similes.

Contemporary in point of time, is a large composition of the Deluge (B. xiii., 71, 3) : the scene is crowded with figures struggling in the flood ; the ark of Noah, very primitive in form, is on the left of the expanse of water, and the treatment and delineation of the overwhelming elements, with the Æolus' heads of the four winds, confirm the early period the print is attributable to. The particulars of the composition are set out in the description in the Official Catalogue of the British Museum ; the impression of the print is accompanied by a copy or adaptation from it, the same in size, with sundry alterations in the general detail.

Four engravings of Bible History claim particular atten-

tion, in succession to that of the Deluge ; they were all executed under one directing influence, if not by the same hand ; and the presence of the four prints in the British Museum, very few impressions of either of them being known, affords opportunity for their study, in the relative connection they bear to each other. In the first (P. v., 39, 93), Moses, on the summit of Mount Sinai, bends in adoration before God the Father, who leans forward in the Heaven above, from amidst a glory of angels He is surrounded by, and commits to the prophet's extended hands the tablets of the Law ; Aaron, in an attitude of prayer, is on the mountain side at the right : the space at the foot is occupied by a crowd of Israelites extending across the print, the following quotation from the Book of Numbers (xxi., 6) being the theme selected by the artist for his composition : " And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people ; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses and said, we have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee ; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole : and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." In accordance with the words of the quotation the scene is graphically represented. On the right, the frightened crowd rushes away in terror from two monster serpents, which have swooped down amongst them with their large outspread wings, and tear with their jaws the men they have seized. The figure of the "fiery serpent," fashioned like a small dragon, is seen on the left, upraised high above the heads of the people, on the untrimmed stem of a tree, and carried towards the terrified multitude on the right.

The second scene, the Victory of David over Goliath (P. v., 39, 94), is the least successful in its treatment, the colossal proportions of the giant recumbent on the ground, and the poverty in drawing of the youthful figure of David, interfering with the harmony of the composition; the charge of spearmen, however, behind the principal figures, is extremely animated; and so likewise is the group of horsemen in the far distance at the right, gathered on the plateau of a hill approached by a mountain pass, through which other troops are seen ascending. The high land on the left is surmounted by a fortified castle, extending from the margin nearly to the centre of the print, and from its gates other horsemen defile down the gorge of the rock, to join the body of troops at the foot. Before complete exhaustion had taken place by printing from it, the surface of the plate was burnished down, and it was made use of for the last of the series, the Adoration of the Magi.

The representation of Solomon's reception of the Queen of Sheba (P. v., 39, 95) is by far the most artistically treated of the four prints. The space at the back is occupied by a vast temple of elaborate architecture, flanked on either side at the margin by massive castellated structures, which are confirmatory of the print having been produced in Florence, from their resemblance to similar buildings in the city. A lofty porch, supported upon rows of double columns, projects into the forecourt of the temple in the centre, where, at its entrance, attended by his pages, stands Solomon, waiting to receive the Queen, who approaches from the left. The wide open area, at the sides and in front, is occupied by nobles and attendants, grouped with admirable avoidance of confusion, horses and other animals being interspersed amongst them.

The fourth and last print, of the Adoration of the Magi (P. v., 40, 96), is equally full of incident: the closely-packed retinue of the kings, advancing towards the Holy Family assembled on the right, occupies the entire width of the composition, comprising upwards of seventy figures, defined with

great distinctness. In some respects it is the most attractive of the series, in the cleverness of expression, and the greater solidity of the shadows, the design is worked out with. Much additional interest arises from the evidence connecting it with the preceding prints, in its having been engraved upon the same plate as the representation of David and Goliath, which was burnished out, as before mentioned, to make room for it; but the deep lines the castellated buildings were cut with, resisted the efforts of the burnisher, and remains of them are still visible in the open space on the left. Certain of the figures are identical with similar groups in the third print of the series; and, from amongst the animals, a pair of coupled cheetahs exactly the same in design, seen far away in the crowd of courtiers attendant upon Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, is placed, amplified in size, in front of the Holy Family.

We are clearly indebted to a painter's hand for the production of the four prints, so cleverly managed is the spirited action in all of them, especially in those of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, and the Adoration of the Magi. The graceful forms of the figures, in their tight hose and close-fitting tunics, are costumed in the fashion which we know from contemporary pictures and frescoes prevailed in Florence, in the latter half of the fifteenth century. In the absence of any attempt at technical cutting, we see, as it were, the pencil drawings of the Italian painter, rendered only with the firmer hand, necessary for the incision upon the soft metal of the lines they are sketched with.

A composition of two of the scenes in Our Saviour's Passion (P. v., 41, 98), "TEMPLVM PILATI" being inscribed on the entablature over the centre arch of the temple they are represented in, is one of the largest in size of these early anonymous engravings. It is divided into three sections, in separate halls: the scourging of Our Saviour is the subject on the left; in the middle portion He traverses an intermediate court; and in the hall on the right He stands, with hands

bound, before Pilate seated on his throne. Great skill is shown in grouping the figures, and the truthfulness of perspective of the vast palatial buildings is maintained throughout, with correctness of detail in their architectural drawing. The right-hand portion only of the print is in the British Museum, taken from the plate after it had been re-worked, and the impression in parts is much drawn upon. An example of the entire print, in an early state, somewhat injured on the left side, is in the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth.

A Resurrection of Our Saviour (P. v., 69, 66), known only from the unique impression in the British Museum, is designed, with some allowance for its mannered treatment, with great dignity and expression. It has the appearance of having been printed from a silver plate, chased for the ornamentation of a small altar, judging by its arched shape at the top. From the set forms of the trees, and the angular folds of the weighty draperies, it is ascribable to an early date in the last half of the fifteenth century; the elaborate ornamentation of the costly armour, and the mannered faces,—of the angel seated on the tomb, and of the four effeminate young knights, aroused from their drowsy watching,—are indicative of German influence. A manuscript inscription (in Italian), joined to the print at the top, bears the probable reading: "In the house of Pietro Venzano Sofini of Murano, and painted in the year 1470."

In the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris there is a print of the Madonna with the Infant Saviour, standing in front of an ornamented throne, with pendants of fruit suspended on either side. S. Catherine of Alexandria is on the right, with her hand resting on the wheel of her martyrdom, and S. Sebastian is on the left holding an arrow: two angels, one playing a violin, and the other a guitar, are seated in front on the steps of the throne, whereon is inscribed "O MATER DEI MEMENTO MEI," and in the margin at the foot "O BEATE SEBASTIANE MILES XPI BEATISSIME QVIA MAGNA EST FIDES TVA

INTERCEDE PRO NOBIS AD DOMINVM VT A PESTE SIVE MORBO EPIDIMIE LIBEREMVR . P.” In the Paris collection the print is classified with the works of Nicoletto da Modena. By Passavant it is attributed to the master “P 1511” (P. v., 221, 2), the final letter of the inscription in the margin being interpreted by him to be the monogram of the master. Kolloff, in his article upon Baldini in Meyer’s “Kunstler Lexikon,” interprets the final letter of the inscription to be the ordinary abbreviation of “Per,” adding “that one can easily tell by the sheet itself, that it reaches back almost half a century prior to 1511. According to the type of the figures and the mode of treatment, it is concurrent in date with the Prophets and Sibyls. The fine close hatching, the ornaments on the Madonna’s brocaded dress and on the hem of her cloak and on the throne, the shape of the cypresses, the grasses, and the herbs, all correspond with the characteristics of those engravings. The inverted ‘2’ and the small ‘9’ and ‘6’ in the inscriptions, instead of the capitals of those letters, also point to the same time.”

Another of the early subjects of the Madonna, typical of the institution of the rosary, is described by Passavant (P. v., 14, 8^b). Impressions of it are in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris, and in the Imperial collection at Berlin, both of them printed from the plate in an exhausted condition. In the centre of the composition, the Madonna, with the Infant Saviour on her knee, is seated on a throne; on the summit of the pillars at the back stand angel children inclined towards each other, holding a large crown over the Madonna’s head, and two angels are at the sides of the pillars, the one on the left playing a violin, and the other on the right a guitar. A pope, whose tiara is at his feet, attended by three ecclesiastics, kneels at the foot of the throne on the left, to whom the Infant Saviour presents a rosary, and an Emperor and Empress, with two attendants at their back, an Imperial crown being at their feet, kneel on the right: the Madonna’s hand is held over the head of the Empress.

Ten incidents of the History of the Madonna, and of the Saviour, commencing with the Annunciation, and ending with the Madonna's Coronation, are represented in square compartments, five on either side. On a tablet at the foot are the half figures of five saints, S. Dominic, holding a lily-branch, being in the centre: at the left are SS. Peter Martyr and Thomas Aquinas, and at the right are a Dominican saint carrying a model of a church, and S. Catherine of Siena, bearing a cross in one hand and a lily-branch in the other.

In following the progress of the art of engraving, from the handicraft of the goldsmith, to the advanced application of it by the painters, for the production of their drawings upon the copper, we find some few of the early specimens retaining, in the lines they are cut with, their characteristic resemblance to the plates prepared for the infusion of niello: noticeable amongst them are the Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne on two plates (P. v., 44, 104), Theseus and Ariadne (P. v., 44, 105), the Triumph of Paulus Æmilius (B. xiii., 106, 4), and the Illustrations of Dante's *Divina Comedia* (B. xiii., 175, 37-56), and of the *Inferno* (B. xiii., 189, 59).

The print of the Triumph of Bacchus has much of the fine chasing we see in those of the Planets, and evidently was executed about the same period. The right half only of the composition, with Bacchus seated on his car, was known to Passavant, who first gave a description of it. Its artistic value was enhanced, a few years ago, by the acquisition for the Print Room of the British Museum, of the missing half of the print, comprising a group of bacchanals dancing in procession under trellised vines, which, it was discovered, formed the portion of the design preceding the car. The other prints referred to, with the same burred tone in their shading, are somewhat later in point of time. We have the date of the illustrations of the *Divina Comedia*, in the colophon of the volume they were engraved for; having been inserted and

bound up with the text of the book—published in 1481—they were intended to illustrate, they passed to the security of the shelves of the library, and to this cause principally we are indebted for so many specimens, in early states of the plates, being now in existence. The process was, in fact, but a continuance of, and nearly identical with, the method employed by the metal-chasers, for the retention of the niello, amplified into bolder cutting, to suit the enlarged application of it for printing from.

The engravings in the *Divina Commedia* are the last of the prints specifically illustrating the manner, regarded as that of Baldini, and the goldsmiths—his contemporaries,—who acquired the distinctive method of their engraving, from their education as workers in niello. The slightly jagged edges of the upturned metal created the burr-like appearance the impressions from the plates are distinguished by in their printing, corresponding in its effect with the first impressions from Rembrandt's dry-point plates.

Very different in character, but attributable also to an early period, are some interesting representations of incidents connected with SS. Dominic and Catherine of Siena, the Martyrdom of S. Peter Martyr being amongst them, illustrating the Dominican influence prevailing in Florence. Our Saviour in the tomb, surrounded by the emblems of His Passion (P. v., 16, 13^b), is by the same engraver. Fine impressions of all of them are in the British Museum. They are worked in a hard, dry manner, in the method employed for the ornamental chasing of plate, but with much expression, and the black outer robes are shaded by close cross-hatching in a style original and extremely effective.

Many of the artificers employed in the decoration of gold and silver plate, continued to work in the employment the extended use of their handicraft had been found to be applicable to. Their manner of introducing the set forms of trees, and the other accessories of the backgrounds, is apparent in several of these early prints. Kolloff remarks, that the

drawings of cypress, orange, and fir trees, by the early Florentine engravers, are ludicrous in their treatment, and compares them to the Nuremberg toy boxes. The effect referred to is owing to the conventional manner of representation, prevailing in the early Italian frescoes and pictures. It is the same in the Otto prints, all of which are impressions from plaques, chased for being made up into coffers or pieces of decorated plate. We have an example of primitive goldsmiths' workmanship in a small rude print (P. v., 23, 45), the subject of it being evidently taken from one of the romances of chivalry. On the summit of a mound, in the centre, two wild men with hair-covered limbs stand armed with shield and buckler; a lion and lioness, face to face, with their fore claws clutched together, are at the foot of the mound. The rising ground on either side is planted with flowers amidst trimmed trees. At the right, a huntsman blowing a horn, by whose side is a buffoon, restrains by a leash a dog rushing in pursuit of some hares; and at the left, a knight, holding his sword upraised over his shoulder, is engaged in combat with a dragon, a female centaur being in the corner above, shooting an arrow from her bow. In the opposite corner, over the huntsman and buffoon, a youth and a maiden, at whose back a naked child plays with a dog, stand on the base of a vase-shaped fountain, from which the title of "The Fountain of Love" has been given to the print.

A similar illustration, of another of the early romances, is a print called by Passavant "*Allegorie sur la lutte de l'urbanité contre la rude grossièreté*" (P. v., 45, 111). From a castle on a hill at the left, two ladies and a knight in fantastic attire, mounted on richly-caparisoned horses, accompanied by their followers in hunting costume, descend with dogs and falcons to the foreground, where some hair-covered savages are seen escaping into a wood on the right, a child being held prisoner by the arm by one of the ladies. A wild man, accompanied by a woman at his side, upholding

a club, resists the capture of the child. Amongst other incidents, a boar is in the background at bay with some dogs. The ladies' head-dresses are noticeable with their horn-shaped projections, from which veils are suspended, and on the bridle of the horse of the lady holding the child is inscribed, "SANSVÉRIEN." Impressions of this, and of the preceding print of "The Fountain of Love", are in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris.

Representations of every-day life and pursuits occur amongst the early Florentine engravings, but genre subjects, popular as they were with the German artists, are met with far less frequently in the works of their Southern contemporaries. Some few specimens are in the British Museum, of women and children at the bath, and vintage scenes, and allegories of historical interest, of less importance, however, than the series of the Planets and the Otto prints, in their record of costume and manners of the time.

The adventure of the sleeping pedlar, and the monkeys pilfering his wallet, so popular in Eastern story, which is met with in the folk-lore of nearly every country, in endless variety of treatment, is represented with much humour in the print (P. v., 190, 105). The Boar Hunt also (P. v., 190, 104), although rude in its engraving, is recognizable as of Florentine workmanship, in its spirited amplification of the scene in the Otto print (No. 8).

The demand for their engravings the Italian artists were called upon to supply, was mainly restricted to incidents from sacred and general history, and mythology and early story from the Romance writers. Highly attractive amongst them, for its artistic merit, is the print of Orpheus beaten to death by the Thracian women (P. v., 47, 120), of which there is a reproduction in the British Museum. The only known impression passed from the Sykes collection to that of Mr. Wilson, at whose sale it was purchased by M. Harzen, and by him was bequeathed to the Museum at Hamburg. A drawing by Albert Dürer copied from the

print accompanied the bequest. The group of the three figures is very nearly the same in the drawing; a lyre instead of a lute is on the ground in front, and, in place of a rock, a clump of trees is at the back. The print is described in Ottley (p. 403), and in an article by M. Ephrussi in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" (xvii., 2nd period, p. 444), entitled "Quelques remarques à propos de l'influence Italienne dans une œuvre de Dürer," accompanied by fac-similes of the print, and of other illustrations, explanatory of the adaptation made by the German master of the subject, in his engraving of the Effects of Jealousy (B. vii., 86, 73). The composition of the death of Orpheus is repeated in a volume of drawings, ascribed to Andrea Mantegna, belonging to the Countess of Rosebery.

The full-length figure of an armed knight (P. v., 195, 115), standing faced to the front, leaning on his shield, resembling in its freedom of design the manner of Luca Signorelli, to whom the drawing has been attributed, speaks a date subsequent to that of the last-named print. On the right side is the inscription "GVERINO DIT MESCHĪ." In Nagler's "Kunstler Lexikon" (v., 433), Guerino is described as "An old Florentine draughtsman and engraver on copper, whom Papillon also reckons amongst the *formschneiders*. He had the surname Meschi, and the time of his activity was about 1495. A warrior standing armed from head to foot is seen leaning on a club. At the top, on the right, is the artist's name." The creation of this imaginary artist is due to the inscription on the print, and affords an illustration of the mistaken identifications excess of zeal for new discoveries is liable to be led into the invention of.

Guerino Meschino was one of the Knights of the Round Table, whose adventures in search of the "Saint Graal" formed the subject of a romance, written, according to Mr. Symonds, in his "Renaissance in Italy" (iv., 246), by Andrea dei Mangalotti of Barberino. Dunlop, in his "History of Fiction" (iii., 37), gives a summary, of the romance "del

nascimento et opere di quello magnifico cavalieri nominato Guerino et prenominato Meschino," ascribing it to Andrea Patria, a Florentine. A copy of the extremely rare *editio princeps* of the Romance (Padua, 1473), is in Earl Spencer's library (Bibl. Spenc., iv., 222). Numerous illustrated editions were printed at Venice: in one, in 8vo., in the British Museum, published in 1508, a woodcut of Guerino, armed, holding his spear, inscribed at the top "Guerrino dicto Meschino," corresponding in drawing, but somewhat larger than the copperplate engraving, is on the first page. The volume contains small vignettes, illustrative of the story, interspersed in the text, and a tastefully-designed border on the recto of a 1. The late Mr. Carpenter, from whom Passavant derived the information, discovered that the copper plate of the engraving had previously been used by the German master of 1466, for the Madonna of Einsidlen (B. vi., 16, 35); an inscription on the arch of the chapel, and other portions of the burnished-out work, being still partly perceptible in the lower part of the Italian print.

Amongst the drawings in the Louvre is one ascribed to Perugino, of a group of three young knights, the foremost figure, somewhat coarsely heightened with white, being almost identical with that of Guerino in the print.

The story of the Dead King and his Sons, represented in an anonymous print by an early Italian master in the British Museum, is thoroughly Florentine in its treatment. In the "Gesta Romanorum" (No. xlv.), the story is told of the king who died, leaving four sons, whose legitimacy and consequent right to succeed him was in dispute. They agreed to refer the decision of their cause to a certain honourable knight of the late king, who ordered that they should draw from the sepulchre the body of the monarch, and that each should prepare himself with a bow and single shaft, and whosoever transfixes the heart of his father should obtain the kingdom. The body was accordingly taken from its resting-place, and bound to

a tree. The three elder brothers shot their arrows, the third of them piercing the dead king's heart. It was now the turn of the youngest son to shoot; but, breaking forth into a lamentable cry, he said, "Oh, my poor father!—have I then lived to see you the victim of an impious contest;—thine own offspring lacerate thy unconscious clay—far, oh! far be it from me to strike thy venerable form, whether living or dead." No sooner had he uttered these words than the nobles of the realm and the people unanimously elected him to the throne. The sons are represented assembled in a wide paved courtyard: the umpire they have chosen is seated on the left, having a shield, bearing the device of the *palli* of the Medici, on the wall behind him: on the opposite side, the dead body of the king, transfixd with arrows, hangs suspended against a tower. The youngest son is seen in the act of throwing down his bow, demonstrative of his refusal to join in the parricidal contest. A large circular temple, copied from the baptistery at Florence, is conspicuous amongst the buildings at the back.¹

Important in size, being nearly two feet high, is the representation of S. George slaying the Dragon (P. v., 70, 70), very spirited in its drawing; the style varies materially from that of the prints previously described, and the engraving is far more minute in its detail, bespeaking, in the precision of its cutting, a later period of production. The Saint, mounted on his rearing horse, on whose breast-band is the inscription "PER FORZA", advances from the right, in the act of transfixing with his long spear the formidable dragon, who rushes open-mouthed from the left;—limbs of its victims are scattered on the ground. The Princess is behind S. George, and the background is occupied by a massive arch, corresponding with the arch of Constantine, with a transcript on

¹ Further references to the authorities upon the subject of the print are given in Dr. Wiltshire's "Catalogue of Early Prints in the British Museum—German and Flemish Schools" (ii., 381).

the face of it of the original inscription, varied in its orthography. The print, in its bold free drawing, sustains the suggestion made by Passavant, that it bears much resemblance to the manner of Antonio del Pollajuolo, but it is more delicately and differently finished than any engraved work we have by his hand. The only known impression of the print is in the British Museum.

A series of fifteen subjects, from the Life of the Madonna and of Our Saviour (B. xiii., 257, 6-20; P. v., 51, 1-15), claim especial attention, from their being the first, amongst these early anonymous Italian prints, which enable us to arrive at a probable identification of the artist of them. Very few complete sets are extant: Bartsch described them in detail, having had the opportunity of doing so from duplicate impressions, in early and later states, in the Imperial collection at Vienna. M. Harzen bequeathed a set to the Museum at Hamburg, where they must be visited, to see them in their earliest condition, with their borders, of which no other examples are known.

M. Kolloff, in his article upon Baldini, quotes the account of M. Harzen's bequest, contributed by C. Meyer to Naumann's Archiv (xvi., 90-91). The fifteen prints, perfect in their preservation, are pasted upon linen, arranged in three divisions, five in each: they are within borders of winged figures and arabesque ornamentation, with candelabra at the sides, engraved on separate sheets by the engraver of the fifteen prints of the Life of the Madonna, evidently for the purpose they have been used for, as borders around the centre compositions. A leaf of these border ornaments is in the Imperial library at Vienna (B. xiii., 141, 73); Bartsch gives a description of them, not knowing their connection with the series of the Life of the Madonna, and catalogues them amongst the anonymous Italian masters. Passavant (v., 12, 141), also unacquainted with their intended application, remarks, in general terms, that they are in the Florentine manner of Baccio Baldini.

The first states of the prints of the Life of the Madonna at Vienna are obscured by colour, which interferes with their critical examination; they bear no resemblance to the works of Nicoletto da Modena, amongst which Bartsch catalogued them. Their correspondence with the paintings and frescoes of Fra Filippo Lippi supports Passavant's opinion, that they emanated from his studio. The fifteen impressions in the British Museum are more or less from the re-engraved plates, but the effective drawing of their first condition, except in some instances, is not materially prejudiced, enabling us to understand that they are of far higher quality, than the feeble works V^{te} Delaborde, in his *Gravure en Italie* (p. 31), pronounces them to be. The first print of the series, the Annunciation, is a very attractive specimen of Florentine design, full of the spirit of Filippo Lippi's invention, although the impression is taken from the plate after every line of it had been renewed. The three subjects,—of the Visitation, the Nativity, and the Presentation in the Temple, are weak and formal in their treatment; those of, Our Saviour on the Mount of Olives, His Flagellation, and His Resurrection, are almost entirely re-engraved; the group in the Flagellation is changed in its drawing, the outline of the three figures being totally altered from the original design, traces of which are still perceptible in the print. The six subjects sustaining, in their composition, as well as in their engraving, the correctness of their attribution to Filippo Lippi, are the Dispute with the Doctors, the Presentation to the People, the Procession to Calvary, the Crucifixion, the Transfiguration, and the Coronation of the Madonna: they are all full of refined expression, and although the impressions in the British Museum are slightly re-worked, they have lost but little of the freshness of their original character. The Descent of the Holy Spirit, and the Madonna in Glory, evince much of the same earnestness of expression, but, like the six of the series previously specified, in succession

to the Annunciation, their engraving has more the appearance of having been executed by students in Filippo Lippi's school. In the concluding scene, of the Madonna in Glory, with the incident of the presentation of her girdle to S. Thomas, we have the early idea of the subject, which was amplified by the master's pupil Botticelli in his large print of the Assumption.

The Triumphs of Petrarch (P. v., 71, 73-78) are very beautiful specimens of the skill the painter-engraver's art had been brought to, and show how accomplished was the hand that retained, in the transference of the drawings to the copper, the sentiment and expression of the poet's verses. The figures of the young handsome women assembled in each scene, noticeable for the fulness of their features, and their thick curled hair, are entirely in the spirit of Filippo Lippi's drawing, and sustain, in the gracefulness and the expressiveness of their action, the correctness of the opinion, that by his own hand most probably they were engraved. By Bartsch they were erroneously catalogued (xiii., 277) amongst the works of Nicoletto da Modena. Ottley had not seen them, but drew the conclusion (p. 437) that they might be the productions of Botticelli. Passavant (v., 71, 73-78) placed them amongst the early anonymous Italian masters, considering they recalled the style of the large print of the Assumption by Botticelli, the design of which he attributed to Filippo Lippi.

The set of the Triumphs in the British Museum was recently supplemented by the acquisition of a second set, printed from the plates in early states, before their first condition had been much impaired by the subsequent re-working they underwent.

Amongst the books in the library of the Earl of Sunderland, which were sold by auction in London in 1882, there was an edition of, "*Il Triumphi del Petrarca—Finisse il commento delli triumphi del Petrarca composto per il prestantissimo philosopho Misser Bernardo da monte illicinio*"

da Siena. Impresso in Venitia con grāde diligentia per Bernardino da Nouara nelli anni del nostro signore . M . CCCCLXXXVIII . adi . xviii Aprile ”. The second set of the six prints of the Triumphs had been inserted and bound up with the leaves of the volume, which, with its contents, was purchased, immediately after the sale, for the British Museum, and is now in the Print Room.

The specimens extant of these painters' drawings upon the copper are extremely limited in number : for the fine point they were engraved with precluded the possibility of many impressions being taken, as the delicacy of the lines in the soft metal they were incised upon became deadened with each pressure of the printing press.

From the date of the publication at Florence in 1477 of a small folio volume, “*ellibro intitulado monte sancto didio Composto damesser Antonio da Siena, Reuerendissimo ueschouo difuligno.—Finito el mōte s̄co didio p̄me Nicolo dilorēzo dellamagna Florentie x die Mensis Septembris Anno Domini . M . CCCCLXXVII*”, we learn the date of the three engravings contained in it.

The book, “compiled and composed by the devout and learned servant of Jesus Christ, brother Antonio (Bettini) of Siena, of the mendicant Order of the Jesuits, Bishop of Foligno,” contains three illustrations, of the Mount of Christ, the Glory of Paradise, and the Punishments of Hell, designed, as it is considered, by Botticelli, in illustration of the author's summary of the contents of the volume, their engraving likewise being deemed to be by Botticelli's hand.

In the first chapter the ultimate and perfect aim of man is shown to be the sight of God, and for the attainment of this sight, the means and method are set out, from the second to the nineteenth chapter, describing how man, by the restorative effects of penitence, becomes qualified for it. From the nineteenth to the twenty-seventh chapter, the manner whereby this qualification is acquired, is explained to be by grace and its various operations, the will of God

inviting and assisting in many ways to the desired vision. From the twenty-seventh to the end of the one hundred and sixteenth chapter, the possibility of arriving at it is described to be by drawing near to the manifestation of Jesus Christ, standing upon the summit of the mountain of Faith, Hope, and Charity, against which is reared the ladder of perseverance, firmly placed on the level ground of enlightened perception, where we find ourselves by virtue of holy humility. Human nature, knowing its own infirmities and defects, and lifting its eyes to the sublime height, whence cometh the only help wherein it can trust, exclaims, "My help is from the Lord," and thus, in Him alone confiding, prepares itself, in the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth chapters, to mount the first step named Prudence in this ladder of Perseverance, one side of it being called Prayer, whereby with devotion of mind we ascend and make our offering to God, the other side being called Participation in the Sacraments, whereby God descends and renders us, human only in power, partakers with Him. We mount the four steps at the foot of the ladder, the first being named Prudence, the second Temperance, the third Courage, and the fourth Justice, and by the exercise of these virtues man rises to the highest altitude human nature is capable of: this is described to the end of chapter eighty-three. But the summit of the sacred mount the ladder leads to is above man's unaided nature, and he must lift his thoughts, and be drawn upwards, by Divine aid. The Holy Spirit consequently is given to the soul, which has mounted the first four steps, and it becomes capable of ascending the seven higher ones, whereof the fifth (first in order) is Timidity, the sixth Piety, the seventh Knowledge, the eighth Courage, the ninth Counsel, the tenth Intellect, and the eleventh Wisdom, by which steps the perfect and uncreated Love of Jesus Christ is reached: the subject is treated to the end of chapter one hundred and sixteen. As man thus raised is placed in Paradise, so in the second part of this book are

described the joys and glories of Paradise, in fifteen chapters. And as whosoever fails to rise to these heights is adjudged to deserve infinite misery, so in the last part of the book are described the pains of Hell, in eight chapters. The seventh and last chapter contains a brief exhortation, in aid of the attainment of Paradise, and the avoidance of Hell and its torments.

In the first illustration, Our Saviour, surrounded by a glory of cherubim, stands on the summit of a steep rock, against which rests a ladder, with various inscriptions on the sides and steps, in the words of the summary of the book, and a young monk is seen ascending it towards the Saviour; on the left of the ladder a youth stands in rich Florentine costume, looking up earnestly, endeavouring to form the resolution to make the same ascent: his left hand held before his face, to shade his eyes from the celestial radiance, supports a scroll, with an inscription (in Latin) from Psalm cxxi., v. 1-2: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help,—my help cometh from the Lord." But he is hindered in his intended effort by the fetters of the world, indicated by the inscription "CECITA" on the band fastened to his ankle, and held by a devil, whose head rises above the lower margin, clutching at him with a formidable three-pronged fork. The illustration of the Glory of Paradise is a majestic full-length figure of Our Saviour, supported by Angels, and surrounded by cherubim, in the midst of a flamboyant aureole. The third illustration, representing the Punishments of Hell, is smaller in size: Lucifer is seated in the centre, the punishments depicted being mainly adapted from the fresco of the Inferno, attributed to Orcagna, in the Campo Santo at Pisa.

"La Commediadi Dante. Impresso in Firenze per Nicholo di Lorenzo della Magna adi xxx Dagosto MCCCCLXXXI" appeared four years after the "Monte Sancto di Dio." The volume was issued from the same press as the "Monte

Sancto di Dio," the commentary of Christophoro Landino being first printed with its text, thus marking a period in the literature, as well as in the art of Florence, with the nineteen illustrations in its pages, wherewith the names of Botticelli and Baldini have jointly been associated. They are the last known productions from plates, incised for printing from, by the method pursued by the goldsmiths, in the preparation of their plaques for their work in niello.

Exceptional opportunity for examination of the prints exists in the British Museum, there being five copies of the book in the Library, two of them with the nineteen illustrations in early states, and a set of the prints is in the Print Room. From the blank spaces left in the text throughout the volume, we see it was intended to place an engraving at the commencement of each canto; but the setting up of the type having been completed before the plates were ready, the first and second cantos only were published with their engravings, spaces being left throughout the whole of the *Commedia* for the remainder of the illustrations; seventeen more were subsequently added to the seventeen succeeding cantos of the Inferno, when the engraver's work appears to have been abruptly brought to an end. Examples of the volume with all the nineteen prints to the Inferno are extremely rare. In each composition, three or four incidents in the canto are represented: Virgil, old and bearded, is dressed in a long cloak with short fur collar and a conical cap; Dante, youthful and beardless, with a berretta on his head, is also robed in a long cloak, falling from the neck,—his cloak, in one unbroken length in the drawings the prints are taken from, has an added overcape, reaching to below the elbows, in the prints.

An examination of the original drawings for the *Commedia* by Botticelli, from which the prints are adapted, renders it evident that Botticelli could have had no part in engraving the nineteen illustrations of the Inferno, so inferior are they, in their composition and execution, to the drawings. Par-

ticals of the drawings are given in the subsequent account of Botticelli. They throw considerable light upon Vasari's mention of the connection between Botticelli and Baldini, and help us to form a more definite opinion respecting the confused ascription to the two artists in "*Le Peintre-Graveur*," by Passavant, of so large a proportion of the early Florentine engravings, with the attempt to define the share they each had in their execution.

Heineken, in his "*Dictionnaire des Artistes*" (iii., 209), pronounced the nineteen prints of the illustrations of the Dante to be by Baldini; and Huber, in his "*Manuel des Curieux et des Amateurs de l'Art*," published in 1797 (iii., 38), is positive in his attribution of them to Baldini, of which there is every apparent probability, from their niello-like workmanship. Ottley and Passavant discuss them seriatim, with the attempt to specify the separate characteristics of Baldini and Botticelli. Kolloff dissents from any attempted distinction, pronouncing them to be all of the same uniform quality.

In the Laurentian Library at Florence there is a folio MS. of the *Commedia*;—inside the front cover of the volume a print is pasted, with a figure of Dante in the centre,¹ which Passavant describes from another impression in the Imperial Library at Vienna (P. v., 43, 101). The style is somewhat in correspondence with that of the nineteen engravings of the *Inferno*, but it is inferior to them artistically, and certainly by a different hand, being ruder and heavier in outline. The print measures 11 inches wide by 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches high. Dante stands in the centre, outside the walls of Florence, faced to the front, holding the volume of his poem in his right hand, the leaves being inscribed with the opening lines of the *Inferno*:

¹ On the first page of a short tract, without date, place, or printer's name—"Credoche Dante fece quando fu accusato per heretico, &c."—described amongst the Florence books (page 158), there is a vignette of Dante holding the volume of the *Commedia*, pointing with his right hand to a vision of the Trinity.

“NEL MEZO DEL CAMIN DI NOSTRA VITA MIRITRO” On the right of the print is a group of some of the principal buildings in Florence,—of the Duomo and Giotto’s tower, the tower of the Bargello, and the Palazzo Vecchio amongst them, surrounded by the city wall. On the opposite side, the region of the Inferno rises as a precipitous rock against the margin, fronted by a massive architectural gateway of the entrance to the *Inferno*, inscribed with the opening lines of the third canto of the Inferno :—

“Per me si va nella città dolente
Per me si va nell’ eterno dolore.”

Numerous figures are on the side of the rock, a naked woman being in front of the group. In the mid distance, behind Dante, *Il Purgatorio*, in the form of a lofty pyramid surrounded by the river Styx, rises to the top margin, with a spiral terrace encircling it, Adam and Eve, with the serpent on the tree of knowledge between them, being on the summit. Each descending curve of the terrace is occupied with figures selected from the cantos in the Purgatorio, and at the base of the pyramid, in front, is the entrance gate, and the Angel of Judgment, seated before it with expanded wings, touching with his sword the forehead of a penitent kneeling at his feet. *Il Paradiso* is represented by the arch of Heaven above, the Sun, Moon, and Stars being introduced in the firmament. In the margin, at the foot of the print, is the inscription “ DANTE ALLEGHIERI POETA FIORENTINO CON ALTO INGEGNO . EL CIELO . EL PVRGHATORO . ET . IL REGNO . INFERNO . AL MEZO . DEL . CAMINO . DI NOSTRA . VITA POSE . IN BEL . LAVORO . QVAL NE DIMOSTRA . IL POEMA . DIVIN.”

In Bandini’s “*Catalogus Codicum Latinorum Italicorum Bibliothecæ Mediceæ Laurentianæ*” (1774-78) the print is described as follows: “Necnon in interiore Codicis tegumento adglutinatum visitur ectypon Orgagnæ Picturæ, quæ in ecclesia Florentina adservatur, ære haud inele-

ganter, in primis artis incunabulis, incisum." It is a copy, either from a design for, or from the fresco in the cathedral, of which it preserves the arrangement, but the buildings of Florence, and the mount of the Purgatorio, are enlarged in their relative size, and various changes of detail lessen the general effect as seen in the fresco; the foremost figure in the Inferno is a demon upholding a banner, for which, in the print, a naked woman, as we have mentioned, has been substituted. The print is partially illuminated, in the same colours as the fresco.

The fresco, dating from the time when lectures were given in the cathedral upon the Divina Commedia, was painted by Domenico di Michelino, a pupil of Fra Angelico, and is on the wall by the door in the north aisle of the cathedral, the commission having been given for it by the Seigniori in 1465. According to Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (*"History of Painting,"* ii., 519) "the painting is careful, the drawing precise, and the colour warm, but flat." Dante is dressed in a red cap and tunic, and the seated figures, in the third curve from the base in the mount of the Purgatorio, have blue mantles. Some few years later the following inscription by Politian was added at the foot of the fresco (Murray, in his *"Handbook for Central Italy,"* says the inscription was written by Bartolommeo della Scala):—

"Qui cœlum cecinit mediumque imumque tribunæ
Lustravitque animo cuncta poeta suo
Doctus adest Dantes sua quem Florentia sæpe
Censit conciliis ac pietate patrem
Nil potuit tanto mors sæva nocere poetæ
Quem mirum virtus carmen imago facit."

Contemporaneously with the *"Commedia di Dante"* of 1481, there was published at Florence *"Geographia di Francesco Berlinghieri Fiorentino in Terza Rima et Lingua Toscana distincta con le sue tavole in varii siti et provincie secondo la Geographia et distinctione delle tauole di*

Ptolomeo," by the same printer, who in the colophon styles himself *Nicolo Todescho* :—"Impresso infirenze per *Nicolo Todescho* & emendato con somma diligentia dallo auctore." The book bears no date, but the type corresponds with that of the *Dante* of 1481, although an earlier period by some years has been ascribed to it. The volume is illustrated with thirty-one maps, rude in their drawing, but carefully executed on the copper by a Florentine engraver; a fine copy, with bright clear impressions from the plates, is in the Print Room of the British Museum.

A similar volume was printed about the same time, "*Clavdii Ptolamaei Alexandrini Cosmographiae Octavi et vltimi Libri Finis*.—*Hic finit Cosmographia Ptolemei impressa opa dominici de lapis ciuis Bononiēsis Anno M. cccc. lxii. Mense Jvnii. xxiii. Bononie*." The date in the colophon is discussed by Dibdin (*Bibl. Spenc.*, ii., 293); it is admittedly spurious, confirmed by the fact that *Philippus Beroaldus*, who revised the book, as we learn from the preface, was not born until 1453 (*Brunet*, iv., 952). Dibdin pronounces the date of the publication of the volume to have been about 1482. It is illustrated with twenty-six maps, engraved on copper, very similar to those in the book of *Berlinghierus*. The impressions, in the copy in the Print Room of the British Museum, are all in early states, before the shadows and other details were added.

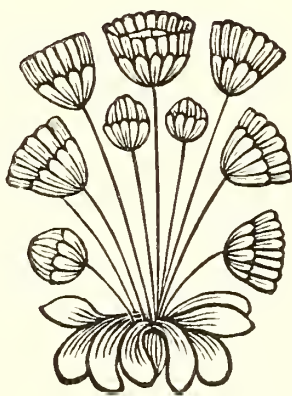
Another edition of the *Cosmographia Ptolemei* has here to be mentioned, although published at Rome: it is one of the earliest books illustrated with maps from engraved metal plates, which are closely in correspondence with those in the preceding edition: "*Claudii Ptolemei Cosmographie liber primus hec habet—Geographiam Arnoldvs Bvckinck e Germania Rome tabvlis aeneis in pictvris formatam impressit—Anno Dominici natalis. M. cccc. lxxviii. vi. idvs Octobris*." The maps, twenty-seven in number, are remarkable for the accuracy of their execution: the work was undertaken by *Conrad Sweynheim* and *Arnold*

Pannartz, the German printers who had settled in Rome ; but they both died—the first in 1475, and the second in 1476—before it could be carried to completion. The engraving of the plates was commenced, as it is generally supposed, by Sweynheim, and the further progress of them is thus narrated in the (Latin) preface, on the reverse of the first leaf:—"Conrad Sweynheim, a German, who first introduced the art of printing into Rome, undertook the care of the press. Mathematicians were instructed by him how they might print, by means of copper plates. Sweynheim died, after having devoted three years to this labour. His situation was supplied by Arnold Buckinck, a German, a man not less qualified in talent and application, who brought the whole of this most ingenious work to a perfect conclusion." A fine copy of the book is in the library of the British Museum.¹

In the Imperial collection at Berlin there is a large print of a bird's-eye map of Florence, engraved on seven wood-blocks, of which no other impression is known. It is fully described by Dr. Lippmann in his "*Italienische Holzschnitt im xv Jahrhundert*," folio, Berlin, 1885 (p. 18). The view was taken from the south-west, the artist delineating his drawing being represented seated upon a brow of land on the left bank of the Arno, opposite the quarter of Sancto Spirito, with the old walls of the city, between the Porta Triano and the Porta San Pier Gattolini, in front of him, and the Pitti Palace rises conspicuous amongst the buildings beyond. The date must be prior to the end of the ninth decade of the fifteenth century, as the Palazzo Strozzi, the building of which was not commenced until 1489, is not seen, and the houses, subsequently demolished to make room for it, are on its site in the plan. "FIORENZA"

¹ Descriptive details of the three volumes are given in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, with explanatory notices of each of them, accompanied by fac-simile specimens of the maps (ii., 293 ; iv., 64, 537).

is inscribed on a scroll under the upper margin. It is the earliest example of so large an attempt at wood engraving, and is clear and sharp in its cutting : the artist evidently was a citizen of Florence, well acquainted with the intricacies of its streets and buildings.





CHAPTER IX.

FRA FILIPPO LIPPI. ANTONIO DEL POLLAJUOLO.



THE three painters Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469), Antonio del Pollajuolo (1426-1498), and Sandro Botticelli (1447-1510), have alone, amongst the artists of Florence, been associated by name with engraving, in these early days of its history : there is no clue to the recognition of any other painter in the city, who can be regarded as having applied himself to the exercise of it.

FRA FILIPPO LIPPI.

Fra Filippo Lippi, born in Florence about 1406, was left an orphan in his childhood by the death of his parents, and was brought up by his father's sister, Mona Lapaccia, who lived, in indigent circumstances, in a house near the Carmelite monastery of Santa Maria della Carmine. He must have been known to the friars from his infancy, and in his eighth year was received into the monastery, and made his profession in 1421. The frescoes Masaccio was engaged upon, in the chapel of the Brancacci, gave Filippo Lippi his first impulse to the study of drawing, in which he speedily attained considerable proficiency, and was employed to paint sundry pictures in the cloisters of his monastery. It is stated by Vasari that, led away by the praise universally

bestowed upon him, he in his seventeenth year abandoned his residence in the Carmine. His association with it, however, was maintained until some years later, as his name appears in the account book of the establishment up to 1431, when further entry of it ceases to be made. During the succeeding twenty years there is but slight information about Filippo Lippi, save that in a bull of Pope Eugenius IV., dated 23rd February, 1442 (Vasari, ii., 614, note 1), mention is made that he was elected rector and abbot of the parochial church of San Quirico e Legnaja, in the neighbourhood of Florence, from which we learn he had not thrown off his clerical habit, as stated by Vasari. In 1452 he was chaplain to the nuns of San Niccolò de' Frieri at Florence: early in the following year, having received a commission to decorate with frescoes the walls of the cathedral, he took up his residence in Prato, and bought a house in the city, opposite the convent of Santa Margherita.

Throughout his unsettled career, *Frate* is always added by Filippo Lippi to the signature on his pictures, and Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their "History of Painting in Italy," argue that Vasari's narrative of his dissolute life is exaggerated, as the entries respecting him, in the public records, relate to the pecuniary difficulties he was involved in, and to his poverty, and the indigent relatives he had to provide for. The publicity of the scandal he became implicated in is mentioned in a letter, printed by Gaye in his "Carteggio" (i., 180), dated the 27th May, 1458, from Giovanni de' Medici to Bartolomeo Serragli, in which he wrote: "And so we laughed a good deal at the error of Fra Filippo."

Cav. Milanese made some interesting researches, and embodied the result of them in a Commentary appended to the Life of the painter (Vasari, ii., pp. 633-43), wherein he informs us that in 1456, when Filippo Lippi was in his fiftieth year, he was appointed to the chaplaincy of the

convent of Santa Margherita: the conduct of the nuns, which soon after ensued, was the occasion of the grave charges that were brought against him.

Two of the daughters, named Spinetta and Lucretia, of Francesco Buti, a Florentine citizen, had, on their father's death, at the end of 1450, been compelled, through their straitened circumstances, to adopt a religious life, and were received in the convent of Santa Margherita. Filippo Lippi undertook to paint a picture for the high altar of the church of the convent, and Lucretia Buti was selected as the model of the Madonna, for the artist to paint from. An intimacy arose in consequence, and on the feast of the Sacra Cintola, which was celebrated in the city with great solemnity, Lucretia made her escape, and took refuge in the house of the Frate, where, in 1457, she gave birth to a son, who afterwards became celebrated as the painter Filippino Lippi. Four other nuns followed their companion's example and left the convent, Spinetta, the elder sister of Lucretia Buti, who also was admitted into the house of the Frate, being amongst them. In 1461 there are the entries of further proceedings against Filippo Lippi, and others, for their disorderly intimacy with the nuns: in 1459 the fugitives were brought back, and compelled to renew their profession of obedience, and resume their residence in the convent. Through the intercession of Cosimo de' Medici, a dispensation was obtained from Pope Pius II., releasing Filippo Lippi and Lucretia Buti from their religious vows, and recognizing their marriage. Lucretia continued to reside in Filippo Lippi's house, whilst he proceeded with the work he had undertaken, which he finished in 1465, and in that year a daughter named Alessandra was born.

The series of frescoes in the cathedral at Prato consist of scenes from the lives of SS. John the Baptist and Stephen, on opposite sides of the choir; and with them the fifteen engraved scenes of the Life of the Madonna, ascribed by Passavant (v. 51) to the master, are stated to be closely in

resemblance. There is nothing definite, connecting Filippo Lippi with the practice of engraving, but the prints in question, in their relationship to the subjects of his paintings, and their correspondence with the known style of his drawing, sustain Passavant's opinion, that, either wholly or in part, they are the work of his hand, or the work of the students in his school, executed by them under the master's direction and superintendence.

The two series of prints, of the Life of the Madonna, and of the Triumphs of Petrarch, have previously been described, with such particulars as we possess of the few impressions extant. The fifteen illustrations of the Life of the Madonna are of varied merit, and some are rude and faulty in drawing; others, on the contrary, especially the Crucifixion of Our Saviour, with the group of the fainting Madonna in the foreground, and the intensity of sorrow of her attendants, and the Coronation of the Madonna, with the Saints and Angels surrounding her, in fervent earnestness of adoration, are of great excellence as examples of devotional expression. They are amongst the choicest specimens of the painter-engraver's drawings upon the copper, of the fifteenth century, and Filippo Lippi has himself left us confirmatory evidence of the correctness of the opinion, that the print of the Coronation is from his own design, the group of God the Father and the kneeling Madonna being nearly identical in treatment with the group in his picture of the Coronation in the Accademia at Florence. The fashion of the crown on the Eternal's head, and of the crown He holds in both hands over the Madonna, the arrangement of the Madonna's veil and the pose of her hands, with the same action in the picture and in the print, are closely in resemblance. In the picture in the Accademia, we have the portrait of Filippo Lippi, kneeling, with hands held together in prayer, on the right, a scroll being immediately in front of him inscribed "I . S . PERFECIT OPVS." The print of the Madonna presenting

her girdle to S. Thomas bears many points of resemblance with the picture by Filippo Lippi, now in the Palazzo Comunale of Prato, of the gift by the Madonna of the *Santa Cintola* to S. Thomas, and with the corresponding representation, in the series of frescoes in the cathedral, illustrating the legend of the Sacra Cintola.

The six prints of the Triumphs are replete with thoughtful idealization of Petrarch's conceptions, in their graceful and imaginative rendering of the subjects of the poet's verses: they are the originals from which, for the most part, the inspiration of all subsequent designs of the Triumphs by Italian artists may be traced. The sylph-like female forms have a peculiar attractiveness in their animated movement, with the remembrance they preserve of life and costume at Florence in the fifteenth century, and of the pageants of the time, for which the Triumphs of Petrarch were frequently selected for representation.

In 1466 Filippo Lippi received the commission to decorate the cathedral at Spoleto with a series of frescoes: he ornamented the half dome, above the tribune, with another Coronation of the Madonna, varied in its treatment, the Madonna being on her knees at the feet of God the Father. Filippo Lippi was still engaged proceeding with the decoration of the apse, when serious illness put a stop to the work, and he died at Spoleto in 1469. In the necrology of the Carmine at Florence, his death is registered as a member of the monastery, by the designation of "Frater Philippus."

ANTONIO DEL POLLAJUOLO.

The brothers Antonio and Piero del Pollajuolo were the sons of Jacopo d'Antonio (surnamed Benci) Pollajuolo,¹ a

¹ Cav. Milanesi (Vasari, iii., 285), in a note, writes that "Antonio and Piero were the sons of a certain Jacopo d'Antonio (surnamed Benci) Polla-

goldsmith and metal-chaser at Florence, who worked under Ghiberti upon his gates for the Baptistery. Vasari was in error in stating the father was in indigent circumstances. Antonio, the elder of his two sons, born in 1426, according to the inscription on his tomb in S. Peter's at Rome, was apprenticed to his father. Piero, the younger by many years, his birth, as we learn from a declaration of the father (Gaye, Carteggio, i., 265-6), not having taken place until 1443, was placed with Andrea del Castagno, of much eminence in his day as a painter. Early in the latter half of the fifteenth century, when Maso Finiguerra was at the climax of his professional reputation, Antonio del Pollajuolo, working in fellowship with him, was celebrated as one of the most accomplished goldsmiths of his time, and there are records of the costly chasings in silver, and articles of plate, supplied by him to the churches of Florence. Important amongst them are, a large crucifix of very beautiful workmanship, and his contributions to the fine dossale of the Baptistery, both still preserved in the guarda-roba of the Opera del Duomo of the cathedral. A niellated pax of the Crucifixion, previously described in the account of the nielli preserved in the National Museum at Florence, has all the characteristics of his drawing, supporting its claim to be

juolo (a dealer in fowls), whence they and their descendants were called 'Del Pollajuolo.' They belonged to the order of citizens, and their origin, therefore, does not seem to have been so humble, as the words of Vasari, and the surname given to them, would lead us to believe. We learn this from the following extract from the grant of a location, quoted by Manni in his notes to Baldinucci. *Franciscus de Cavalcantibus . . . locat ad pensionem Antonio olim Jacobi del Pollajolo civi florentino unam apothecam ad usum aurificis in populo Sanctae Ciceriae in via di Vacchereccia.* Antonio was the elder of the two brothers, and according to a declaration made by him, was born in 1431:—or, rather, in 1429, if the declaration by his father Jacopo in 1430 is reliable, wherein he states that his son Antonio is a year and a half old; and we incline to this view. Piero, according to the declaration made by his father Jacopo in 1457, appears to have been born in 1443 (Gaye, Carteggio, i., 265-6). Hence we see they were not, as Vasari tells us, born within a few years of each other."

considered one of the paxes which, according to Vasari (iii., 287), were executed by Pollajuolo for San Giovanni, with histories of the Passion of Christ. There is no niellated pax of a Deposition from the Cross by Pollajuolo at Florence, as stated by Passavant (i., 267). In the National Museum there is a small circular coloured enamel, somewhat in the style of Pollajuolo, with the subject of the Deposition,¹ where the body of Our Saviour is sustained by the Madonna and her attendants, the group being surrounded by the lamenting Disciples. The enamel is mounted in a massive silver frame of elaborate workmanship, God the Father, surrounded by cherubim, being engraved on the face of the arch at the top.²

Antonio and his brother Piero were closely associated during their lives. Antonio added much skill in painting to his other accomplishments, but the pictures extant are, for the most part, considered to be by the hand of the younger brother. The sculptured works Antonio was engaged upon led him necessarily to the study of anatomy; in the pursuit of it he went through a course of dissection of the human body, and acquired considerable knowledge of the action of the muscles. There are three known prints by Antonio (B. xiii., 202); one of them, previously mentioned, large in size, bears the inscription, “. OPVS . ANTONII .

¹ Cav. Milanesi states (*“L’Art,”* 1883, p. 223) that he believes it formerly belonged to the Cathedral.

² Amongst the doubtful nielli which belonged to Prince Poniatowski at Rome, all of them regarded as of modern Venetian manufacture, there was an upright silver plaque of a Descent from the Cross (D., 104), “believed to be engraved,” as Duchesne states, “by Antonio del Pollajuolo.” Duchesne gives detailed particulars of the composition, without mentioning the name of Poniatowski, but refers to the account of the niello in the *“Cabinet Seroux d’Agincourt.”* An outline of it is engraved in *“Histoire de l’Art par les Monumens par Seroux d’Agincourt”* (vi., pl. clxix., No. 10), where it is described as being in the possession of Prince Stanislaus Poniatowski.

POLLAIOLI . FLORENTINI.”¹ The subjects of these prints, of naked men wrestling in fight, engaged in murderous conflict, are not attractive, although commended for the skillfulness of the drawing of the struggling combatants. Mr. Symonds, in his “Renaissance in Italy” (“The Fine Arts,” 146), remarks upon “the clenched teeth, strained muscles, knotted brows, and tense nerves depicted by Pollajuolo with eccentric energy. We seem to be assisting at some of those combats *a steccato chiuso*, wherein Sixtus IV. delighted.”

Antonio del Pollajuolo’s mode of engraving is distinguished by a strong bold outline, worked by a defined rule of cutting, with technical precision of drawing. The motive is evidently the desire to produce a composition, demonstrative of the knowledge of anatomy he had rendered himself proficient in. Ottley (p. 446) assigns 1460-1470 as the probable date of the prints, and describes them as “engraved with a firm and deep stroke, and the internal parts are shaded, with singular delicacy and neatness of workmanship, by zigzag diagonal hatchings.” Passavant (v., 49), in his account of the prints, designates the style of their cutting, as better than that of Baccio Baldini and Sandro Botticelli, and quotes Vasari as his authority for the statement. Vasari’s words are (iii., 295): “He engraved a battle of naked men, bound together by a chain, and afterwards many other plates, with far better execution than the other masters who had preceded him.”

The diagonal hatching Antonio del Pollajuolo’s shadows are worked with, may have occasioned the surmise which has been advanced, that some of the figures of the Prophets and Sibyls were engraved by him. The figures of the Virtues, in the Uffizi, seated on thrones within niches of ornamented

¹ In the British Museum there is a rude woodcut copy of the “Battle of Naked Men” (B. 2), of the same size, with the engraver’s signature, “*Johannes . de . francfordia*”, substituted for the original inscription, “. OPVS . ANTONII . POLLAIOLI . FLORENTINI ” (P. 1, 132).

architecture, painted by the brothers, have the same solemnity of treatment in their statuesque-like character ; but the slight delicate chasing of the engravings of the Prophets and Sibyls is at variance with the deep firm method employed by Antonio del Pollajuolo. The latter's paintings for Lorenzo de' Medici, of the Labours of Hercules, are described by Vasari (iii., 294), "as worthy of imitation by all good artists." Engravings of two of the paintings were made by Robetta, in the subsequent account of whose works descriptions of them are given. They seem to have been the types for similar representations, which became the *tour de force* of so many of his contemporaries and successors. A spirited pen sketch by Antonio, for the small picture in the Uffizi of Hercules and the Hydra, is in the British Museum.

One of the early anonymous Italian prints, extremely difficult to form a critical opinion upon, is of a Fight of two Centaurs (P. v., 50, 4), placed by Bartsch amongst the works of Gaspar Reverdino (xv., 478, 23). By Ottley the print was included, with the expression of doubtfulness as to the correctness of its being so, amongst the works of Antonio del Pollajuolo. Passavant adds it to them in an appendix (v., 50), remarking that the style of its cutting does not correspond with the master's known engravings. A similar attribution of it was made by M. Duplessis in his "Histoire de la Gravure" (p. 43). The drawing of the Centaurs and of the attendant spectators has all the characteristics of Pollajuolo's manner, but the engraving has no pretension to be considered as of the master's workmanship.

The disagreeable picture of the Martyrdom of S. Sebastian in the National Gallery in London, called by Vasari the masterpiece of the Pollajuoli, was painted in 1475 for the Pucci family ; the nude figure of the saint is said to be a portrait taken from life of Gino di Lodovico Capponi.

Vasari states (iii., 297) that "after Antonio del Pollajuolo's death, there was found amongst his effects a design

and model he had made for Lodovico Sforza, for the equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan. We have the design in our (Vasari's) book, in two different manners; in one of them he has beneath him the city of Verona; in the other he is in full armour, upon a pedestal covered with battle-pieces, and forces his horse to leap upon the back of an armed man beneath him."¹ Vasari adds, "I have not been able to discover why the statue was not carried out." In the subsequent memoir of Leonardo da Vinci, we learn that he was the successful competitor for the commission for the statue, and an account is given of the efforts he made to complete it, and of the failure that attended them.

In the Royal collection at Munich there is a drawing of a mounted warrior, corresponding with the description of the design mentioned by Vasari, with a soldier prostrate under the fore feet of the horse, the face, in profile, of the rider being evidently a portrait of Francesco Sforza, from its close resemblance to the well-known medals of him. M. Louis Courajod first directed attention to the drawing, in an article in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (vol. xvi., 2nd period, 422), illustrated with a reduced fac-simile of it: he pronounced it to be a drawing of the statue proposed to be erected of Francesco Sforza, which Antonio del Pollajuolo and the artists of the time had been invited by his sons to compete for the construction of; and M. Courajod writes, "that without being able to attribute the drawing to Leonardo da Vinci himself, the design, with great apparent probability, emanates from his school. The head of the horse, extremely spirited, is thoroughly in the style of

¹ "E si trovò, dopo la morte sua (di A. del Pollajuolo), il disegno e modello che a Lodovico Sforza egli aveva fatto per la statua a cavallo di Francesco Sforza, duca di Milano; il quale disegno è nel nostro Libro, in due modi: in uno egli ha sotto Verona; nell' altro, egli tutto armato, e sopra un basamento pieno di battaglie, fa saltare il cavallo addosso a un armato" (VASARI, iii., 297).

Leonardo. It is not an outline, like the pen sketches at Windsor, or those preserved in the engraving published by the Marquis d'Adda. The pen is used without hesitation or afterthought, and the design, thoroughly matured, reproduces to our view a monument, of which no single detail is left to the fancy of the artist. One can suppose that it was drawn direct from the original monument, and I am convinced that it represents the model in its accepted state of completion."

In 1879 M. Courajod published a pamphlet, "*Leonard de Vinci et la statue de Francesco Sforza*," which is a revised reprint of his article in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*."

Signor Morelli in his "*Italian Masters in German Galleries*," 1883, discusses the question relating to the Munich drawing (pp. 90-97), and describes it as "a very fine one, for an equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza, lightly and boldly outlined with the pen, and shaded with thin sepia, recognizable by anyone who is at all familiar with the drawings of Antonio del Pollajuolo, as the work of his hand. We see before us an old, bald-headed warrior, mounted: under his horse's hoofs lies the enemy thrown to the ground. The face of the horseman has the well-known features of Francesco Sforza. This capital drawing may, in all probability, be one of the two drawings of Antonio del Pollajuolo, which Vasari had in his possession, and which, according to his statement, Antonio prepared in competition for the monument, that Lodovico il Moro intended erecting at Milan to his great father Francesco:—unfortunately, this latter sheet, evidently the one before us in the Munich collection, has been mutilated, the '*basamento pieno di battaglie*' being lost."

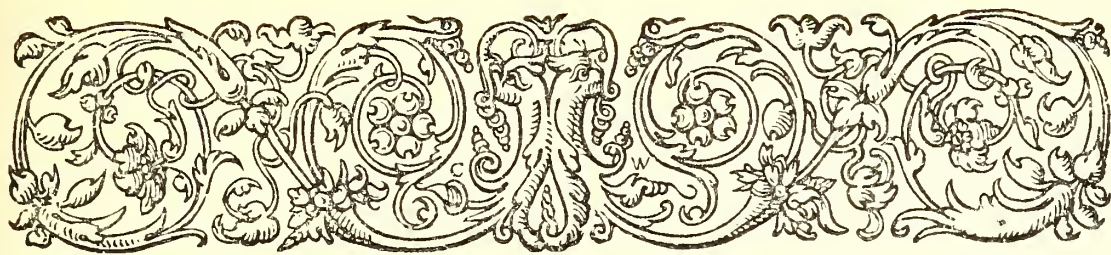
Signor Morelli adds, that, "among the competitors (for the statue) we find the then celebrated Florentine sculptor Antonio del Pollajuolo. The prize, however, must have been awarded, not to him, but to Leonardo da Vinci. In this way we get a simple explanation of the following words,

in Leonardo's well-known letter to the Moro : ' Ancora si potrà dare opera al cavello di bronzo, che sarà gloria immortale et eterno onore della felica memoria del Signor vostro Padre, et della inclita casa Sforzesca.' ”

Shortly after the accession of Innocent VIII. to the Papacy, Antonio went to Rome, whither Piero soon followed him. Amongst other works the brothers were engaged upon were two bronze sarcophagi in S. Peter's,—the one of Pope Innocent, surmounted by a seated statue of the Pontiff in the act of giving the benediction, taken from the life,—and the other of his predecessor, Sixtus IV., with his recumbent figure on the top of the sarcophagus. The numerous commissions the brothers received resulted in the accumulation of considerable wealth ; they died at Rome in 1498, according to Vasari, and were buried in the church of S. Pietro in Vincoli ; marble busts, executed by their pupils, are placed over their tomb, whereon is a tablet commemorative of the Papal monuments they had constructed, and of Antonio's death in 1498, aged 72 (“ Vixit an. LXXII. obiit an. Sal. MIIID ”). In the sacristy of S. Pietro in Vincoli there is a bronze tabernacle of their construction, wherein the chains the church derived its designation from are deposited.

Recent research has resulted in the finding Antonio's will, and some other documents, comprising amongst them a claim addressed by the Florentine Government to their agent at Rome, for the recovery of some moneys due to his widow. From the will we learn that Piero, by some two or three years, predeceased his brother.





CHAPTER X.

ALESSANDRO BOTTICELLI.



ALESSANDRO, the youngest of the four sons of Mariano Filipepi, a citizen of respectable position in Florence, was born in 1447.¹ Vasari writes of him (iii., 309), that he was diligently brought up by his father, and instructed in all things which it is customary to teach young boys, previous to their being put to some trade : nevertheless, although he acquired whatever he chose to learn, he could never be satisfied with any school of reading, writing, or arithmetic ; so that his father, tired by his instability, placed him with a goldsmith, a friend of his, called Botticello, who had the reputation of a skilled professor of that art : the apprentice adopted his master's name, and was called and became known as Sandro Botticelli.²

¹ Gaye, in his "Carteggio" (i., 343), gives an extract from the archives of Sta. Maria Novella respecting the family of Mariano Filipepi, consisting of a declaration made by the father, with an appended note by him, dated 1486, wherein he enumerates the ages and occupations of his sons, concluding, "e Sandro di anni 33 è depintore, lavora in chasa quando vuole." From a note of Cav. Milanese (Vasari, iii., 321, note 3) we learn an error was made by Gaye in the date of the above declaration. "In a note (No. 2, p. 312, vol. ii.) we have said that Botticelli was born in 1447, founded upon a declaration of his father Mariano Filipepi in the year 1480 (in Gaye, through an error of printing, 1486)."

² Cav. Milanese (Vasari, iii., 310, note 1) writes : "Of a goldsmith called Botticello there is no mention : we believe, instead, that the painter was called *di Botticello*, after his brother Giovanni, who was known by this appellation."

Vasari further informs us that in those days there was a close degree of fellowship, and, as it were, a continued intimacy between the goldsmiths and the painters; whence Sandro, who was of great shrewdness, and devoted to the study of design, became enamoured of painting, and wished to apply himself to it. He therefore made his father acquainted with his desire, who, knowing the impetuosity of his disposition, took him to Fra Filippo of the Carmine, and arranged with him for his instruction. Having then given himself up entirely to that art, he followed and imitated his master with so much assiduity, that Fra Filippo became greatly attached to him, and instructed him with so much care, that he shortly acquired a degree of excellence no one could have imagined.

Botticelli's first known painting, "when yet a lad," is the emblematical figure of Fortitude, forming the seventh of the series of the Virtues in the Uffizi, the other six having been painted by the brothers Pollajuolo: the young artist's talent speedily attracted attention, and was brought into notice by the patronage of the Court of Florence.

In one of the most refined of Botticelli's compositions, an Adoration of the Magi, painted for S. Maria Novella, now in the Uffizi, several members of the Medici family are represented; the king at the feet of the Madonna is a portrait of Cosimo, *Pater Patriæ*, his favourite son Giovanni, who died prematurely in 1463, being portrayed in the second, and his murdered grandson Giuliano, in the third king: the account given by Vasari (iii., 315), differing slightly in the stated positions, is generally considered to be of this picture, although Ottley, in a note to his translation of the description (408), applies it to another picture of the Adoration he was possessed of. An altar-piece in the Accademia at Florence, of the Madonna enthroned, in a marble chamber, with saints at the sides, is equally of historical interest, from its containing portraits of Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici kneeling in front, in the guise of SS. Cosmus and Damianus. Many of

the figures are feeble in expression, and the picture is considered to be more probably the work of some clever pupil: the face, upturned in profile, of the kneeling saint on the right, is copied from that of the king in the crowd, near the right margin, in the Adoration of the Magi in the Uffizi.

Of Botticelli's numerous Holy Families, many of them circular in form, the most characteristic example is in the Uffizi, where amongst the attendant angels, two of whom hold a crown over the Madonna's head, portraits have been recognized of some of the Medici children: a replica of the picture is in the Louvre.

In the Accademia are two of Botticelli's grandest compositions:—The Madonna enthroned, where angels draw back the curtains suspended at the sides; an assemblage of saints is before the throne, amongst whom are, on the left, S. Catherine of Alexandria, and in front, on the right, the weird figure of S. John the Baptist:—and the Coronation of the Madonna by God the Father, with the full-length figures of S. John the Evangelist, and SS. Augustin, Jerome, and Eloisius at the foot. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in a catalogue of the painter's works appended to their *Life of him* (ii., 424), describe another Coronation of the Madonna in the church of S. Jacopo di Ripoli, with an assemblage of eighteen saints, nearly life size, arranged in front and at the sides of the throne;—"this picture, long assigned to Domenico Ghirlandaio, is a careful production of Botticelli's fine time, and stands in some relation, as regards beauty, to the Adoration of the Magi, in which the kings are portraits of the Medici:" Signor Morelli, in his "*Italian Masters in German Galleries*" (p. 342), states that he considers it is the work of one of Botticelli's pupils.

The National Gallery in London has recently become possessed of important works of the master, comprising amongst them his largest picture, painted for Matteo Palmieri, an influential Florentine citizen, and friend of Lorenzo de' Medici, the author of a poem, in imitation of the

Divina Commedia, called “*La Città di Vità.*” Vasari gives a full account of the picture, which corresponds with that in the catalogue of the National Gallery, where it is described (No. 1126) as “*The Assumption of the Virgin.*” The upper portion of the picture is occupied by the representation of a dome-shaped firmament, illumined by clouds of glory, and studded with stars. In its circumference are disposed distinct cycles of Angels, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs, standing or sitting in triple rank. A third and upper row is composed of Cherubim and Seraphim, amongst whom are introduced S. Peter, S. John the Baptist, and S. Mary Magdalene. In the centre of these the Saviour sits, bearing on His left knee an open volume, inscribed with the mystic letters ‘A’ and ‘Ω.’ He raises his right hand in benediction towards the Madonna, who kneels in adoration before Him. In the lower portion the Apostles are gathered round the tomb of the Virgin, and Matteo Palmieri and his wife are represented on either side kneeling in adoration.”

The picture, on its completion, had been placed over the altar in the donor’s chapel, for which it had been painted. Objections were raised by the ecclesiastical authorities of Florence to the orthodoxy of the composition, and it passed into comparative oblivion; eventually it was bought by the tenth Duke of Hamilton and taken to England, at the sale of whose pictures by his grandson the twelfth duke, in 1882, it was purchased for the National Gallery.

Another small picture, of the Nativity, in the National Gallery, has become invested with additional interest, from the interpretation, by Professor Colvin, of the date, and of the Greek legend upon it:—“this picture I Alessandro painted at the end of the year 1500, in the troubles of Italy in the half time, after the time during the fulfilment of the Eleventh of S. John, in the second Woe of the Apocalypse, in the loosing of the Devil for three years and a half. Afterwards he shall be chained, according to the Twelfth of John, and we

shall see him trodden down, as in this picture." The picture was obtained from Mr. Fuller Maitland, who bought it of Mr. Ottley : although much repainted, it is extremely bright and luminous in colour. The Infant Saviour lies on the ground, looking upwards, in animated action ; the Madonna, kneeling on the right, bends over Him with clasped hands, S. Joseph, with his face buried in his folded arms, being seated on the left. The group is beneath the roof of an open pent-house, whereon the winged heralds of the Annunciation are seated, singing their song of joy : on the right the three shepherds, in obedience to the summons they have received, conducted by a celestial messenger, kneel in adoration, the three kings, under similar guidance, being on their knees on the left. A throng of angels dance in a circle in the air above, dropping their crowns to earth, and other angels are seen in the foreground rushing into the shepherds' arms, with rapturous greeting, typical of the reconciliation of Heaven with Earth, whilst the devils hurry away in terror at the corners.

The legend on the picture records the painter's faith in the prophecies of the Revelation, and the groups of angels introduced in the scene, from their correspondence with similar groups in the drawings for the *Divina Commedia* in the Imperial collection at Berlin, remind us that Botticelli's thoughts were at the time in full occupation, imagining his illustrations of the *Paradiso*.

Botticelli is described as being of a genial disposition, and extremely popular amongst his fellow artists, for his sociable qualities. A story is told of the ingenuity where-with he baffled the troublesome proceedings of a dyer, living next door to him, the blows of whose fulling hammers caused so much vibration in his studio, that work in it was rendered impossible. His neighbour having refused to abate the annoyance, Botticelli, with the aid of his pupils, poised stones on the top of his outer wall, which, becoming disturbed from their balance, through the effect of the dyer's

operations, toppled down upon his tiles : in self-defence the dyer was compelled to remedy the nuisance which had been complained of.

In the fresco, painted by his pupil Filippino Lippi in the Brancacci chapel in the church of S. Peter Martyr, he introduced the portrait of Botticelli, standing amidst the crowd, costumed in a long red cloak ;—the picture was painted after Botticelli's return from Rome, when he was verging on his fortieth year ; the massive features tell of his power and determination, with but slight indication of the undercurrent of his sensitive and affectionate nature.

Early in 1482 Botticelli was summoned to Rome by Sixtus IV., and was appointed director of the decoration of the Sistine chapel in the Vatican, which was to be painted with frescoes,—twelve of them to consist of subjects from the life of Moses, and twelve of scenes in the life of Our Saviour. Three of the frescoes,—the Temptation of Our Saviour, and two Old Testament histories, of Moses in the land of Midian, and of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram,—were entrusted to Botticelli. Numerous incidents, the same as in his illustrations of the *Commedia* of Dante, are brought into the limited space allotted for their representation, creating confusion in the arrangement, but they are all depicted with great animation and distinctness of the varied details crowded into each composition.

Botticelli was in the prime of life and of his art activity, when, towards the end of 1484, he returned from Rome. The before-named picture of the Assumption of the Madonna, painted for Matteo Palmieri, in accordance with the descriptions in his poem of "*La Città di Vità*," had, prior to the donor's death, which occurred during Botticelli's absence from Florence, been placed over the altar of his chapel in San Pietro Maggiore. On the artist's return, he found the picture had been pronounced to be replete with heresies : an interdict was placed upon the chapel, and the picture was hidden from view. Smarting under

the perilous risk of such a charge, Botticelli was instigated to the composition of his picture of Calumny, now in the Uffizi, which he painted for his friend, Fabio Segni, by whom the four verses inscribed at the foot were written :

“Indicio quemquam ne falso lædere tentent
Terrarum reges parva tabella monet ;
Huic similem Ægypti Regi donavit Apelles:
Rex fuit, et dignus munere, munus eo.”

The verses are no longer on the picture.

The subject occupied Mantegna's pencil, and other artists have painted it, after Lucian's well-known description of a picture by Apelles, illustrative of the legend “calumniæ non temere credendum.” Botticelli's composition, with its rich architectural background, surpasses, in its clever drawing, any other attempted representation of the story; the admiration it attracted brought him into closer relationship with Lorenzo de' Medici, and his learned and accomplished associates, and for some few years Botticelli's pictures were in response to the tastes of the luxurious society of the Court of Florence.

Vasari tells us “he painted many things in the house of the Medici for Lorenzo the elder, amongst them a figure of Minerva; and for various private houses pictures of a circular form, and many with female figures naked, two of them at Castello, a villa of Duke Cosimo, the one representing the birth of Venus (now in the Uffizi), the other Venus adorned with flowers by the Graces” (now in the Accademia). “An animated figure of Bacchus” also is mentioned. In the National Gallery there are two similar compositions, both of doubtful authenticity, one of Mars and Venus, the other of Venus reclining with Cupids, and a series of the Seasons is stated to be in private hands in London. In the oratory of Sant' Ansano at Fiesole are four of the Triumphs of Petrarch—of Love, Chastity, Time, and Divinity, which have been ascribed to Botticelli. Cav. Milanesi (Vasari, iii., 328) gives a detailed description of

them, from which we learn, that in their general treatment and the disposition of the figures, they vary materially from the engravings of the Triumphs ascribed to Filippo Lippi.

Amongst the most original of Botticelli's works of this period are four oblong panels, which were painted for the sides of the bridal coffers of Lucretia Pucci, who was married in 1487. The wealthy family of the Pucci, whose patronage had materially aided the brothers Pollajuolo, employed Botticelli, as Vasari tells us, to paint "Boccaccio's story of Nastagio degl' Onesti, in four pictures of small figures, full of animation and beauty." The story is commemorated in the verses of Dryden and Byron. The different incidents of the spectral hunt in the forest of Ravenna, and the banquet given by Nastagio in the wood, where the guests start up in dismay, as the dogs and their victim come rushing into the tent, whereon are suspended the shields of the Pucci and Medici families, are painted with great ability. The most attractive is the last of the series, the wedding feast of Nastagio and his bride. The four panels were bought from a descendant of the Pucci family by the late Mr. Alexander Barker; they were sold at Messrs. Christie's sale-rooms after that gentleman's death, in 1874, and now belong to Mr. Leyland, of London. Some repainting they have undergone, but the buoyancy of action throughout the four pictures wherewith the story is told illustrates the imaginative power Botticelli was possessed of.

A recent discovery, amongst a number of pictures, long since stowed away in the store-rooms of the Uffizi, has made known a large panel, unfinished, ascribed to Botticelli, which apparently throws some light upon the passage in Vasari, "that the best print we see by his hand is the Triumph of the Faith of Fra Girolamo Savonarola of Ferrara." The late Mr. Heath Wilson contributed a notice of the picture to the English periodical "*The Academy*" of the 20th November, 1880, and in his words we give the description:—

“ It measures five feet seven inches by three feet five inches and a half ; it is painted in distemper, parts of it being only commenced, others half done, and none of it completed. It has escaped profane re-touching, with the exception of the Virgin and Child, finished in oil by a restorer, and apparently ruined ; but it may be possible to remove the oil-colour. The picture contains about one hundred figures, and many horses, the subject being a mystery, which, however, may be explained, keeping in mind the opinions of Botticelli, and his admiration of the doctrines of Savonarola. The scene is divided into three sections by great masses of rock, designed in Sandro's usual manner, and broadly washed in with distemper colour. In the openings between these a distant landscape is indicated, with, to the left, the gate of a city. Numerous horsemen approach by three roads towards the foreground of the picture ; those on the right of the spectator fight as they crowd through the narrow aperture of the rocks. The centre of the composition is occupied by the Holy Family, before which seven figures of elderly men kneel in ardent devotion, one kissing the Holy Child's feet, while three others bend forward with the object of similar prostration. A wide circle of figures, all men, surrounds the central group, and beyond these are the advancing horsemen. It is quite obvious that the subject is not the Adoration of the Magi, but, that the picture has a profound meaning, is made manifest by two figures to the left, one representing Girolamo Savonarola, who with an eager expression gazes on the face of Lorenzo de' Medici, and points to the Saviour. Nothing can be more intense than the answering look of Lorenzo. This picture must have been painted, after Botticelli became a follower of Savonarola, and, doubtless, the different personages represented are portraits. One has been pointed out to me as Domenico Benevienè, the earnest defender of the doctrines of the great Dominican ; and I may point to the figure of a

usurer who departs on one side, covering his turbaned head with his hands. By the establishment of the Monte di Pietà, Savonarola destroyed usury. Another head, of grave beauty, is evidently that of Leonardo da Vinci. All the actors in the mystic scene exhibit a variety of earnest and intense expression, and I remember no work of the period, which equals this in the skill wherewith living expression is rendered. Many are animated by unhesitating faith and devotion; others are pensive, some doubtful; but all are grave and respectful. Vasari, speaking of Botticelli's engravings, says that one was 'the Triumph of the Faith of Girolamo Savonarola of Ferrara.' This print is unknown, but the picture may well be called a Triumph of Faith, in which Savonarola is surrounded by his disciples."

The date of the picture must be shortly precedent to that of Lorenzo de' Medici's death. Mr. Heath Wilson concluded with some critical remarks, in support of the correctness of its ascription to Botticelli, and added that, "if painted, as seems obvious, in honour of Savonarola, its consignment to oblivion may be readily explained."

The retouching, and the serious errors of drawing, which have been introduced, far exceed Mr. Heath Wilson's estimate of them. Not only the group of the Holy Family, but nearly every face has been tampered with, and the picture is irretrievably ruined. The conception, however, is of great power and originality, fully sustaining the correctness of the ascription made of it to Botticelli. It has every semblance, as Mr. Heath Wilson supposed, of being the composition referred to by Vasari, and the events that occurred on the death of Lorenzo de' Medici, in 1492, sufficiently account for the fate that befell the picture. There was no longer a patron for so large a work, in the state of society that ensued in Florence, and the fear of the charges of heresy it was rife with, may well have restrained Botticelli from encountering, at such a time, a repetition of the danger he had incurred with respect to the altar-piece painted for

Matteo Palmieri: the circumstances fully explain that the completion of the picture was put a stop to, never to be again resumed.

The publication of the *Commedia di Dante* in 1481, with its nineteen illustrations, and the commentary of Christophoro Landino, created considerable interest. The subject was peculiarly attractive at the Court of the Medici, where the examination of the great poet's mysteries was one of the favourite topics of discussion, by the learned society Lorenzo de' Medici had gathered around him. Botticelli's marvellous drawings for the *Commedia* at Berlin bring to our knowledge the earnestness of thought and imaginative power wherewith he had applied his pencil, through a long succession of years, to their elucidation and representation. Vasari writes of Botticelli, respecting his connection with the poem of Dante (iii., 317):—"dove, per essere persona sofistica, comentò una parte di Dante, e figurò lo Inferno, e lo mise in stampa; dietro al quale consumò di molto tempo: per il che, non lavorando, fu cagione d'infiniti disordini alla vita sua. Mise in stampa ancora molte cose sue di disegni ch'egli aveva fatti, ma in cattiva maniera, perchè l'intaglio era mal fatto: onde il meglio che si vegga di sua mano è il trionfo della Fede di Fra Girolamo Savonarola da Ferrara."

These words of Vasari tell us that from an early period Botticelli had devoted much time to the study and illustration of the *Divina Commedia*. Cav. Milanesi, in a note in his edition of Vasari (iii., 316-17), gives a quotation from an anonymous author of the "*Notizie de' pittori fiorentini da Cimabue a Michelangelo*," in the MS. Gaddiano in the National Library in Florence, wherein it is stated that Botticelli "per Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici dipinse e storio un Dante in cartapecora che fu tenuto cosa maravigliosa."

In 1882 the acquisition was made by the Prussian Government of a MS. of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, illustrated with eighty-five silver point drawings by Botticelli,

considered, by very general consent, to be the drawings referred to. An account of them is given by Dr. Friedrich Lippmann, in the "*Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kuntsammlungen*" for January, 1883. The MS. was purchased from the Duke of Hamilton, whose grandfather, the tenth duke, had obtained it, about 1803, of Francesco Molini, a bookseller at Paris. Dr. Lippmann describes the illustrations as drawn on prepared parchment, with a soft metallic pencil of a mixture of lead and silver, a fine pen having subsequently been used with great care to strengthen them. The MS. comprised an entire codex of the *Commedia*, which had been collated by Molini, and the volume remains in the condition it was arranged in, the drawings being placed opposite the text of each canto. The earnestness of study devoted to their composition is manifest throughout the whole series. Fifteen of the drawings, at the commencement of the *Inferno*, are missing; the remainder of them, as well as those of the *Purgatorio* in its entirety, are delineated with careful minuteness of detail. The subjects of the *Paradiso* are not all finished, fourteen of them not having been carried further than the figures of Dante and Beatrice, represented larger in size than Dante and Virgil in the two preceding divisions of the poem: three of the pages at the end remain blank, the drawings not having been commenced. One only of the drawings, the illustration of the eighteenth canto of the *Inferno*, is finished in colour. Dr. Lippmann remarks that the hand of Botticelli can be recognized in this painting, but that he clearly arrived at the conviction the realism of colour was inappropriate for the supernatural theme he was engaged upon, and that the simple immaterial medium of black and white was alone suitable for its delineation, adding that, fortunately for the work, the artist remained satisfied with the single attempt to make a finished picture in colour, and did not repeat it. Amidst the numerous scenes, remarkable in their redundancy of imagery, the representation of the hierarchies and

the nine choirs of angels passing in circles, forming the illustration to the twenty-eighth canto of the *Paradiso*, is one of the most exceptional in its beauty and clearness. The figures, nearly one hundred in number, are all distinct in their drawing, and Dante and Beatrice are represented standing in the centre, looking up, in enrapt attention, at the heavenly throng floating past them, bearing escutcheons, or pennons, or wands, or other symbols, whilst many carry scrolls or tablets. The tablet borne by an angel in the lower circle, the third on the left from Beatrice, is inscribed in small letters, "Sandro di Mariano," Botticelli's family name. The inscription affords confirmation of the authorship of these wonderful leaves, which are amongst the most imaginative creations the age of the Italian Renaissance produced.

Pier Francesco de' Medici, for whom it is supposed Botticelli delineated this series of illustrations of the *Commedia*, was of a collateral branch of the family, and was known for his connection with the artists of the day, the statue of an Infant S. John, now at Berlin, having, it is said, been made for him by Michelangelo; on the expulsion of the Medici in 1494, he declared himself of the "*popolani*," and was allowed to remain in Florence. Pier Francesco de' Medici died in 1503, and the loss of the patron, from whom Botticelli had received the commission for the Dante, occasioning the drawings to be thrown on his hands, may have put a stop to his proceeding with them; the troubles moreover in Florence, coupled with Botticelli's increasing infirmities, probably hindered the completion of the work.

We have no clue to the history of the MS. during the 300 years which elapsed after Botticelli's death, until it passed into the possession of Francesco Molini, from whom it was purchased by the Duke of Hamilton.¹ For a period of upwards of twenty years, prior to 1503, the drawings had

¹ The only published mention of the MS. was in the Duke's lifetime. Dr. Waagen, on the Duke's invitation, visited him at Hamilton Palace,

been in progress, as we know from the use made of them for the engravings of the *Inferno*, in the edition of the *Commedia* published at Florence in 1481; the engraver's indebtedness to them is manifest in the correspondence in treatment of the figures of Dante and Virgil: from the loss of fifteen of the drawings at the beginning of the *Inferno*, four only, to cantos 8, 17, 18, and 19, remain for comparison to be made of them with the engravings; they clearly demonstrate, however, that the drawings served as the models the four corresponding prints by Baldini in the volume of 1481 were adapted from.

Dante and Virgil are, in several instances, retained by the engraver, in the positions they occupy in the drawings; but owing to the smallness of the plates he had to work upon, little room was left for the insertion of the details of the incidents of the scenes they are engaged in, and they are consequently weakened in their arrangement; the faces and the figures, which are engraved with a strong firm outline, suffer material change of expression in their transference to the plates, and the composition of them, through their compression into a space far too limited to allow of their representation, retains scarcely a trace of the spirit of the originals: the marked departure from Botticelli's refinement of drawing, offers convincing proof that he could have had nothing to do with the engraving.

and, in "The Treasures of Art in Great Britain," published in 1854 (iii., 307), the Doctor writes: "Various hands, of various artistic skill (in the MS. of *La Divina Commedia*) are discernible; that of Sandro Botticelli is very obvious; he is known to have studied Dante with great zeal, and to have furnished drawings for Baldini's engravings in the Landino edition. While many of the drawings at the early part of the work are very interesting and spirited, the larger figures in the latter part are the finest and most original with which this poem has ever been illustrated." The Duke was not well, occasioning Dr. Waagen's visit to be a hurried one, which will account for his remark that the drawings are by various hands; if he had had the opportunity of a second inspection, he would have seen that they are all indubitably by Botticelli.

The drawings, we may assume, were entrusted to Baldini, to enable him to execute the engravings he was commissioned to supply for the edition of the *Commedia*, printed at Florence in 1481. The volume, as before has been mentioned, was, in the first instance, published with two only of its illustrations to the two first cantos, blank spaces in the text being left throughout for the remainder. Seventeen more were subsequently completed, extending to the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*, when the engraver's contributions came to an end, attributable, no doubt, in the absence of all record about Baldini, to his death not long after the issue of the volume in 1481. Botticelli had been detained at Rome for two years and upwards, completing the frescoes in the Vatican; to the occurrence of Baldini's death during his absence, and to the consequent delay by Botticelli in reclaiming the drawings on his return, the loss of the fifteen at the commencement of the *Inferno* may be attributed.

For some time prior to Botticelli's abandonment of the goldsmith's workshop his boyhood was passed in, a great advance had been made in the utilization of the new process the metal-chaser's art had been found to be applicable to. The second issue of the prints of the Planets was published in, or previous to, 1465; and when, in that year, Botticelli was admitted into the studio of Fra Filippo Lippi, he must have taken with him considerable acquaintance with the technical skill in metal chasing the days of his youth had been devoted to the acquisition of. The practice of engraving was then in active operation in Florence, having created very general interest, from the novelty and attractiveness of the prints that were produced, and the series, of the Life of the Madonna, and of the more carefully finished Triumphs of Petrarch, if we are correct in assuming Fra Filippo Lippi to have been the author of them, must have been completed and published prior to the expiration of 1469. On the master's death in that year, Botticelli was thrown on

his own resources; it is not probable the new development of the talent he had passed his early years in the acquisition of, from which a considerable revenue was derivable, could have been allowed to remain neglected by one so qualified to exercise it. All the attendant circumstances are confirmatory of the information, derived from Vasari, that Botticelli, amongst his other occupations, pursued the practice of engraving.

Ottley, in his "Inquiry," where he gives a translation of Vasari's *Life of Botticelli*, discusses the question (pp. 404-437), and describes seriatim the prints classified by him as executed by Botticelli and Baccio Baldini. He catalogues the series of twenty-four prints of the Prophets (p. 396), "amongst the first productions of Baldini," remarking that he "thought it very probable they were engraved, after designs made by Botticelli at an early period of his life—probably not later than between 1460 and 1470." And he prefaces his description of the prints of the twelve Sibyls (p. 432), which he placed amongst the engravings of Botticelli, with the remark that they "are designed so exactly in the manner of Botticelli, and in their style of engraving bear so striking a resemblance to the two described pieces of Fra Marco's Preaching and the Last Judgment, that I think I incur but little risk of error, when I ascribe them to the same artist. Indeed, the more I have examined them, the more I have been convinced that they are his work."

Ottley's judgment was founded upon the resemblance, in the style of the cutting of the two pieces he refers to, with the rare set of the Sibyls (B. xiii., 91, 9-20) in the British Museum: it is manifest, on their comparison, that they were engraved by the same hand. The seated figure of Fortitude, before mentioned as the first recognized painting by Botticelli, has much resemblance in manner with these early prints of the Prophets and Sibyls, which lends support to the correctness of the association of Botticelli's name with the designs for them.

In succession to the illustrations executed by Botticelli for the volume of the *Monte Sancto di Dio* published in 1477, and the engravings by Baldini, after Botticelli's drawings, for Dante's *Divina Commedia*, published in the edition of 1481, we have the three great representative Florentine prints of the latter part of the fifteenth century—the Assumption of the Madonna, the Last Judgment, and the Preaching of Fra Marco. The most important, in its distinctive identification with the painter's method of drawing, is the Assumption of the Madonna. Although varied in arrangement, the motive of the Apostles assembled round the tomb is the same as in the large painting by Botticelli in the National Gallery in London.

In the print of the Assumption, there is great beauty and ideality in the faces of the Madonna and of the angels in attendance upon her. Botticelli evidently intended to individualize the Apostles, in the foreshortening of whose upturned faces, and the treatment of their hands, faults of drawing are observable. These faults of drawing have been noticed disparagingly, in comparison with the correctness of detail in Botticelli's pictures. Amongst many of the early Italian prints, inattention to finish of the hands and feet is of frequent occurrence; observable first in the *Planets*, still more so in the *Tarocchi*, the same fault occurs in the *Life of the Madonna*, and the *Triumphs of Petrarch* of Filippo Lippi. We see it in Botticelli's other prints of the Last Judgment and the Preaching of Fra Marco, and in many of the drawings in the Dante volume at Berlin.

The print of the Last Judgment, of which impressions, in the first, and in a later state, are in the British Museum, corresponds, in the manner of its cutting, with that of the Assumption of the Madonna; but the expanse of the scene, and the consequent diminution in size of the figures, owing to the large number of them brought into the limited space they are represented in, necessarily impairs the freedom of action seen in the Assumption,—in the groups of the Madonna

and attendant angels, and of the Apostles. The keeping men's thoughts upon the relative fate of saints and sinners was an essential element in theological teaching, and from the earliest days of Christian art, the painters frequently selected it as the theme for their compositions : the angels' reception in their arms of the redeemed, as they rise from their graves in the foreground of the print of the Last Judgment, is extremely spirited, and their faces, and those of the Saints and Angels arranged with the Heavenly Host, are replete with Botticelli's earnestness of expression, reminding us of the angels' energetic greeting of the shepherds, in the small picture of the Nativity in the National Gallery.

The arrangement of the print of the Last Judgment corresponds with that in the picture by Fra Angelico, painted, as Vasari tells us, for the friars of the Angeli, now in the Accademia at Florence. Fra Angelico's picture is adapted, with much added detail and solemnity of treatment, from the fresco attributed to Orcagna, in the Campo Santo at Pisa. In both paintings, and in Botticelli's print, there is the adjunct, on the right, of a representation of Dante's Inferno, into which the wicked are driven, with Lucifer as a hideous monster sitting in the midst. In the Fra Angelico picture Lucifer is represented immersed to the waist in a caldron of liquid fire ; he has no wings on his shoulders, like those introduced in the print. In the Orcagna fresco there is no caldron, and the entire figure of Lucifer, down to the feet, is seen. He is thus represented, in full-length figure, colossal in form, on a double leaf, the last of the Botticelli illustrations of the Inferno, in the drawings of the *Commedia* at Berlin : large expanded wings, indicated only in outline, bat-like in form, with an eye in each fold of them, are on his shoulders in the drawing.

There are three separate engravings of the Inferno, all of early Florentine workmanship, the illustration in the "Monte Sancto di Dio" being one of them. Upon another, oblong in form (O. 373 ; P. v., 43, 102), "QVESTO . ELINFERNO .

DEL . CHĀPOSANTO . DI PISA .” is inscribed, in the upper left corner. This print is the most artistic in drawing of the three representations of the Inferno, engraved very much in the style of the Baldini illustrations of the *Commedia*, and, as far as an opinion can be formed from the late impression in the British Museum, it must be the print, engraved most probably by Baldini, after the design alluded to by Vasari: the worn-out plate was used for Morona’s “*Pisa Illustrata*,” published in 1787, and is said to be still in existence. The third representation of the Inferno, upright in form (B. xiii., 90, 8; P. v., 8, 8, and 44, 103), apparently copied from the last-named print, is much less vigorous in execution, and many of the figures are omitted.

The large upright print of the Preaching of Fra Marco is full of interest, in its graphic representation of the subjects men’s minds were directed to in Florence, at the end of the fifteenth century, by Savonarola’s eloquent preaching. Ottley (p. 424) writes, that “Vasari, after having made mention of the prints for the Dante, observes generally, that Botticelli engraved various other pieces from his own designs; and especially a print representing ‘The Triumph of the Faith of Fra Girolamo Savonarola,’ which, he assures us, was preferable to all that he ever did in that way. Could this identical piece by Sandro be discovered, which, excepting the ‘Inferno of Dante,’ is the only one Vasari specifies, it would doubtless greatly assist us in determining concerning the others by his hand. No ancient engraving, however, exactly answering the above title has hitherto been found; and when I venture to suggest, that the following piece may very possibly be that which the Aretine biographer intended to describe, I must at the same time assure the reader, that I should not offer such a conjecture, were it not, in the first place, that the design is so strictly conformable, in its style, to the known works of Botticelli, as to leave, I think, no doubt of its being his; and, secondly, that the subject represented in it, viz., the

triumph and universal exercise of the Christian virtues, appears to be such as Vasari, in his hasty, and often careless manner of writing, may readily be supposed to have described under the above title; more especially if one of the two probabilities be admitted,—either that he omitted to read the inscriptions on the plate,¹ or that he wrote from memory.”

The groups of children gathered around the pulpit, and the seven acts of mercy, with the supplicants for alms, and the penitents throwing their contributions upon the “mons pietatis,” are correspondent in character with the known proceedings adopted by Savonarola, in the conduct of his crusade in support of the triumph of the faith: in the various accessory groups brought upon the scene, we have the illustration of the religious enthusiasm dominant at Florence at the time, of which Botticelli was so zealous a supporter.²

The first notice of the print of the Preaching of Fra Marco is by Bartsch (xiii., 88, 7), who was unacquainted with it in its first state: his account is taken from a late impression, bearing, as he tells us, the following inscription, in the lower part of the composition, on the left: “Septem misericordiae opera. In aes incisa Florentiae, sub inuentam incidendi artem, cujus archetypum Romae in Musaeo F. Gualdi Ariminen. Milit. S. Stephani

¹ In the days of Vasari there was no inscription upon the print, as we learn from the early impression in the British Museum, before its addition, which was not engraved upon the plate, until 1632.

² Mr. Ruskin, with the letter (No. 22) of 19th September, 1872, of his “Fors Clavigera” gives a frontispiece, in which the kneeling Friar and the Mons Pietatis, with two of the pilgrims on the right receiving alms, are reproduced, from drawings made for him from the print, describing it as “The Mount of Compassion and Coronation of the Builder;” and in the text he writes: “This month’s frontispiece is a fac-simile of two separate parts of an engraving, originally executed by Sandro Botticelli. In the distance prays the Monk of Ancona, who first thought—inspired of Heaven—of such war with usurers; and an angel crowns him, as you see.”

asseruatur, et Urbano VIII. P. M. Luci reddita. 1632.” And from this inscription Bartsch pronounced the print to be a production of the seventeenth century, copied from a very old one of the fifteenth century, formerly found in the Museum Gualdi at Rome, which must have been engraved between the years 1470 and 1480, judging by the notice found in the “*Annales Minorum seu trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum auctore A. R. P. Luca Waddingo Hiberno Romæ 1735*” (Tom. xiii., page 456, No. xi.), wherein the writer speaks of the old print, as being amongst his curiosities.

Ottley’s account (426) of the print is taken from an impression, in the same late state, in Mr. Lloyd’s collection, “but without the inscription at bottom, which has been scratched out. It bears the appearance of a modern impression, taken from an ancient engraving, after the plate had been coarsely re-touched all over.” Adding, that Bartsch’s judgment of its being “merely a copy of an ancient Florentine print, formerly preserved in the Museum Gualdi at Rome, was by no means a necessary inference,” but that he (Ottley) was “rather of opinion that the original, spoken of as existing in 1632 at Rome, was the design, or rather the picture, from which Botticelli had engraved the plate, and that having long laid neglected, perhaps in some convent of the Franciscan Order, Pope Urban VIII., hearing of it, might, in 1632, have given directions that it should be republished.” That he was “the more inclined to believe such to have been the case, because Botticelli appears often to have employed himself in painting similar representations of religious mysteries, in compositions of numerous figures on a small scale; and because, in its style of execution, the print in question, so far from having the appearance of a modern copy, bears the strictest resemblance to many known Florentine engravings of the fifteenth century.”

Ottley adds, in a note, that he had been unable to refer to the work of Waddingus, which was not in the British

Museum Library. A copy has since been acquired, and in vol. xiii., p. 456, there is a passage, giving an account of the Montes Pietatis. The following is a translation of an extract from it, relating to the print:—"This is the first erection of a Mons Pietatis I have come across, although Barnabas of Terni, the first founder of these Montes and pious deposits, had instituted others before ("Anno, 1474," is in the margin). I keep it, amongst other memorials of my studies, as a remembrance of venerable antiquity, having acquired it by accident. It is engraved upon old copper plates, and graphically represents Marc preaching from a pulpit, various functions and ministries being likewise represented, and it is noticeable for the pleasing variety of the costumes of that age."¹

¹ The following is the text of the passage in Waddingus:—

Marcus a S.
Maria in Gallo
Mōtem Pietatis
instituit.

*Monum. MSS.
Fabrian.*

"XI. In frequentissimo & nobili oppido Fabriani in Marchia Anconitana, hoc anno Marcus a sancta Maria in Gallo, ejusdem Provinciæ non ignobili vico, ferventissimus prædicator, Montem Pietatis erexit. Videns enim Christianorum, præsertim pauperum, substantium usuris, & iniquis Hebræorum contractibus attenuari, & ad nihilum ferme reduci, modum hunc adinvenit, pauperum necessitatibus subveniendi. Collectam magnam pecuniarum summam reponi jussit, mutuo commodandam egenis, dummodo reddendæ pignus adhiberetur. Nomen Montis indixit sanctæ Mariæ a Jesu, optimisque regulis per viginti quatuor capitula distributis, erigendi & conservandi modum die xxiv. Aprilis præscripsit. Omnia confirmavit generale oppidanorum consilium die xxiii. Junii, Hieronymus Petri Conradus & Collegæ Priores; Angelus Meus, & Collegæ Regulares; Joannes Franciscus Petri, & socii deputati, Natanbenus Valenti de Trevio, oppidi Potestas, sive Gubernator, & demum Episcopus Marsicanus Thesaurarius & Vicarius seu locum tenens Legati in Provincia Marchiæ, qui tunc residebat in urbe Fanensi. Dubia aliquot circa intellectum prædictæ normæ Montis conservandi, a quibusdam objecta, idem Marcus iv. Decembris amplius declaravit præsentem Gaspare Stellutio, & Collegis Prioribus cum reliquis consiliariis. Prima hæc mihi occurrit Montis Pietatis erectio, etsi alios prius erexerit Barnabas Interamnensis, primus horum Montium,

We learn by the date in the margin of the passage in the "Annales," that these Montes Pietatis were in active operation in 1474. Their establishment in Florence, by Savonarola, enhanced his influence and the efficacy of his preaching, through the self-denial he inculcated, and the abandonment of all articles of luxury and of superfluous self-adornment, for the purpose of their being applied for charitable uses:—large contributions of money were likewise brought under his control, for the relief of the poor.

In the Print Room of the British Museum there is a bright clear impression of the print of the Preaching of Fra Marco, taken from the plate in its first state, before the inscription was added at the foot. From the examination we are enabled to make of it, side by side with the prints of the Last Judgment, we see that by the same hand both plates were engraved.

Ottley describes a small quarto volume he had seen, in which there is a woodcut, of the same composition as the large engraving, of the Preaching of Fra Marco. A copy of the book is in the British Museum Library; it is a Treatise of 164 pages, consisting of homilies upon the Commandments and Canons of the Church, the title being "Libro delli Comandamenti di Dio del Testamento Vecchio et Nvovo et Sacri Canonî.—Composto da Frate Marco dal Monte Sancta Maria in gallo Dellordine de

Anno, 1474.

piorumque depositorum fundator, uti inferius dicemus, quam etiam vetustis tabulis æreis graphice delineatam, Marco ex suggestu docente, variis functionibus & officialibus distinctam, ejus temporis habituum grata diversitate notabilem, fortuito acceptam, in venerandæ vetustatis memoriam, inter reliqua studiorum monumenta conservo. Opus & doctrina Montium Pietatis erigendorum temporis decursu magnas passa sunt difficultates & contradictiones, quas nos suo loco opportunius suggeremus. Porro Fabriani alius erectus est Mons Pietatis Montaninus, a fundatrice Montanina, Joannis Fogliani Firmani olim conjuge, nuncupatus."—Waddingus, "Annales Minorum," vol. xiii., p. 456.

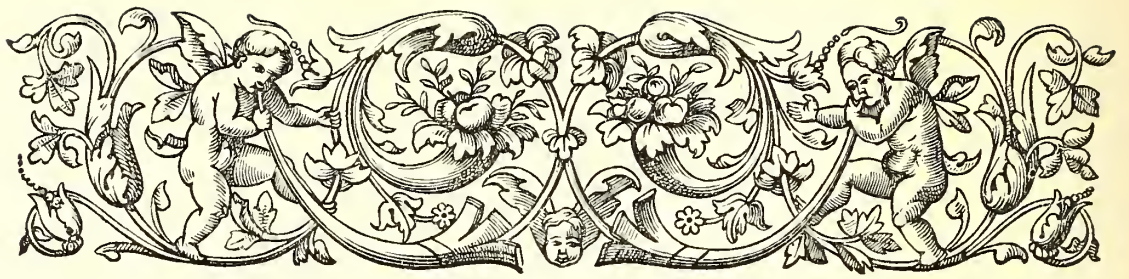
Fрати minori Della Provincia Della Marcha di Ancona. Impresso in Firenze per maestro Antonio Miscomini Anno. M.CCCCLXXXIII." On the title there is a small cut of the Friar preaching, and, on the reverse of the second leaf, a woodcut occupies the page, corresponding in composition, and drawn in the same direction, as the large engraving of the Preaching of Fra Marco, but with the omission of many of the details, owing to the want of space. The friar is in his pulpit, and his audience is grouped around it, extending across the space at the foot, the mound of money being immediately beyond, inscribed "MONS PIETATIS." There is no other inscription on the woodcut: S. Gregory is at the right raising the Host, the deliverance of the prisoners being represented on the same side; but the other acts of mercy are omitted. In the top margin, above the print, is the inscription: "La figura della uita eterna o uero del paradiso & delli modi & vie dipuenire ad quello."

Lorenzo de' Medici died on the 8th April, 1492, and the changes that speedily ensued in Florence gave men other things to think about, than the buying of pictures and the adornment of their palaces. The disruption of society which succeeded the entrance of Charles VIII. and the French troops into Florence in November, 1494, followed by the banishment of the Medici, put an end to the patronage Botticelli had been dependent upon, and his attention became concentrated upon the promotion of the religious movement the city was agitated with. The productions of his easel must have been left on his hands, not from the want of appreciation of their merit, alleged as the reason, but from the dispersion of the purchasers of them, during the feuds and struggles to maintain her political existence Florence for many years continued to be engaged in.

The preaching of Savonarola brought under its influence Botticelli's fervent temperament, and he became one of the friar's most earnest disciples: a life of the friar was said to have been written by him, but all trace of

it is lost. Vasari tell us of Botticelli's premature old age; of his being obliged to move about on crutches, and that, dependent upon the charity of his friends, he became a pensioner upon the bounty of the Medici. Expelled, as they had been, from the city in 1494, their troubled existence, during the last years of the painter's life, could have left them but little leisure to attend to such claims; their return to Florence, and temporary restoration to its government, did not take place until December, 1512, when it was too late to be of any service to Botticelli, as his death occurred on the 17th May, 1510, and he was buried by the side of his father, in the family vault in the church of the Ognisanti.





CHAPTER XI.

EARLY FLORENTINE BOOKS ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.



THE Monte Sancto di Dio, of 1477, with its engravings by Botticelli, and the Divina Commedia of Dante, printed in 1481, with its engravings by Baldini after Botticelli's designs, are regarded as the earliest known books with illustrations from incised metal plates, published in Italy in the fifteenth century. Nicolaus Lorenz, the printer of them, was a native of Breslau : he styles himself "della Magna" in the colophon of each of the two volumes, and "Nicolo Todescho" in that of the "Geographia Berlinghieri," published by him about the same time as the Divina Commedia. Printing presses had some few years previously been established in Florence ; the first that was set up having been so in 1471, by one of its citizens, Bernardo Cellini, who worked in metal under Lorenzo Ghiberti.

At the time of the publication in 1481 of the Divina Commedia, a demand had arisen for the engravers' aid in the decoration of the books the printers were occupied in issuing. The far easier applicability of wood blocks and metal plates, cut in relief for insertion with the type, occasioned the preference for their adoption, and we find they were extensively employed for the numerous volumes sent

forth, in relation to the religious dissensions society in the city became engaged in.

Savonarola left his native town of Ferrara, and went to Florence in 1488, where he was chosen prior of the Monastery of S. Mark in 1491, an appointment retained by him until his martyrdom on the 23rd of May, 1498. Lorenzo de' Medici could have entertained no thought of the estimate the new prior would form of his duties, or have imagined what an element of discord he was unconsciously introducing into the civil and religious life of Florence, when he invited Savonarola to the city. Dependent as Lorenzo de' Medici was upon the support of the Papacy, the war declared by Savonarola against the profligacy of its priests, seriously enhanced the difficulties the rulers of the State were involved in, and society became divided between the friar's supporters and his opponents. The interest created in the controversy is shown in the extent of the literature connected with it, which during the eventful ten years of Savonarola's ministry was brought into circulation for the promulgation of his doctrines. Many of the books that were issued are ornamented with engravings of incidents in the great preacher's career, and in exposition of his teaching. Remarkably in contrast to his turbulent eloquence, is the feeling for the beautiful in nature, and the appreciation of it as an exponent of his arguments, so frequently met with in his sermons; they abound with passages of great ideality and refinement of poetical expression in their figurative blending of art with religion.

The essays and religious treatises of the time were very frequently ornamented with a vignette on the first page, and, from the ephemeral form of their publication, they have either been lost, or have become so scarce, that it would be impossible to compile a complete list of them. There is a curious and extensive collection in the British Museum Library, from which our information is mainly derived, and the volumes relating to the ministry of the

great friar, and the personality of him they in some slight degree make us acquainted with, first demand our attention.¹

On the title-page of the "*Compendio di Revelatione*" (1495), which passed through numerous editions, there is a vignette, extremely spirited in its drawing, of the interior of the cathedral at Florence, and Savonarola in the pulpit preaching to the crowded congregation, separated, the men from the women, by a suspended curtain. In the same volume we have a woodcut, descriptive of an imaginary journey Savonarola relates that he went upon, to intercede with the Madonna on behalf of Florence. He stands at the entrance of a hermit's cave, the minaretted turrets and buildings of a city being seen in the distance, attended by Simplicity, Patience, Prayer, and Faith, in the guise of handsome young women, with nimbi around their heads. Savonarola's hands are upraised in amazement on discovering the clawed feet and horned head of the Evil One beneath the ample robe and hood of the supposed hermit, with whom he had been in converse.

In the "*Dyalogo della uerita prophetica*" a woodcut occupies the first page, with the representation of seven dignified listeners, some of them draped in Oriental costume, assembled in a meadow in the neighbourhood of Florence, the dome of the cathedral and other buildings being seen in

¹ A valuable contribution to the literature of books printed with illustrations in their pages in Italy, in the fifteenth century, is the "*Italienische Holzschnitt im xv Jahrhundert von Friedrich Lippmann*," Berlin, 1885, previously referred to, which first appeared in the "*Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*" (Berlin), wherein the subject is discussed with exhaustive examination, the text being accompanied with numerous fac-similes of the prints these early books are ornamented with.

In a 4to volume, "*Les Illustrations des Ecrits de Jérôme Savonarole publiés en Italie au xv^e et au xvi^e siècle, et Les Paroles de Savonarole sur l'Art, par Gustave Gruyer*," Paris, 1879, with fac-similes of some of the engravings in them, selected from the examples preserved in the National Library at Paris, we have the record of many of the books, in direct relationship with the great friar's ministry, which contain illustrations in their pages.

the distance ; they are seated under the shade of a tall tree, listening to Savonarola, who addresses them, from the opposite side, with earnest gesture : the dove of the Holy Spirit, with descending jets of sacred fire, is over his head.

In the "*Trattato contra li astrologi*" (1497) the illustration is of Savonarola standing in the courtyard of a palatial building, in front of a wide façade, beyond which a distant landscape is seen ; he holds a book, with a small cross resting on its opened leaves, and addresses an astrologer, who lifts up before him an armillary sphere : the arabesque border, with eagles at the base and tritons at the top, used in the books printed by Miscomini, surrounds the page. In the "*Epistola devota et utile a una devota donna Bolognese sopra la sancta comunione*", and other contemporary treatises, there are three vignettes of the great reformer's interviews with the nuns of the Murate at Florence, commemorative of his discourses and remonstrances against the costly needlework and gold and silver embroidery the nuns were celebrated for the manufacture of : all these vignettes are highly characteristic and expressive in their drawing of the abbess and her companions assembled in a cloister of their monastery, listening to the preacher's impressive discourse.

In the "*Tabula sopra le prediche del Reverēdo P. frate Hieronymo Savonarola*" (1495), the first page has a vignette in the text, of Savonarola seated in his cell, writing at a desk with an hour-glass on a table by his side, and a large crucifix before him ; the page is finished with a border of chimerical sphinx-like figures at the top, and boys riding on griffins at the bottom. In a similar volume, "*Libro della simplicità della vita Cristiana*" (1496) there is another portrait of Savonarola in his cell, the furniture of it being nearly the same as in the woodcut of 1495 ; the drawing of the face, with the hood of the robe around it, is in close resemblance with the rare medallion portrait of the friar by Marcantonio Raimondi.

To an early period is to be attributed an *Ars moriendi*,

“ Incomincia elprohemio della arte del ben morire cioe *ī*gratia di dio compilato & composto per lo reverendo in christo padre Monsignor Cardinale di fermo neglianni del nostro Signore. M.cccc.lii.” ending on the reverse of the last leaf, c . vj, “ Finito ellibro del ben morire tucto storiato . Deo. gratias.” Dibdin, in his description of the book in his *Bibliographical Decameron* (i., 139), taken from a copy of it then belonging to the Rev. Mr. Rice, which is now in the writer’s possession, tells us, “ the type exactly resembles that of Miscomini, the great typographical ornament of the city of Florence — It is without date or name of printer ; but was probably not executed before the year 1490.” Of the twelve illustrations introduced in the text, ten are adapted from the early xylographic prints, with the significant omission of the “ Inspiration against vain glory,” where the mouth of hell is seen by the side of the dying man’s bed, and a monk is amongst the figures engulfed in the flames. Two death-bed scenes are added, the fashion of the furniture of the rooms, and of the dress of the personages who are assembled in them, being manifestly Florentine. The cuts are arranged in the following order :—(1) A youth fully draped lies with his head to the right, on a couch placed in front of a massive cabinet ornamented with two large vases : a winged demon is by his head, and at the other end of the couch stand a woman, and a young man draped in an ample robe falling to his feet, who reads from a paper held in his left hand : close to them are two demons : three angels are on clouds above, and on the wall, over the heads of the man and woman, there is a framed picture of the Madonna holding the Infant Saviour : at the opening of the door of the chamber on the left, Death waits with his scythe. The scenes adapted from the early xylographic books then follow, beginning with (2) The Devil’s Temptation of Faith, (3) The Angel’s Inspiration of it, (4) The Temptation of Impatience, (5) The Temptation of Despair, (6) The Inspiration of Hope, (7) The Inspiration of Patience,

(8) The Temptation of Vain-Glory, (9) The Temptation of Avarice, (10) The Inspiration against it, (11) The Angels receiving the Soul of the Young Man on His Death Bed:—the last of the series, (12) follows in a subsequent part of the text, on the reverse of B 7; a chamber of costly construction is represented, its marbled floor and ceiling being chequered black and white, and festooned hangings are suspended along the dado; at the end, on the right, with a chair on the floor before it, there is an altar surmounted by a crucifix in an arched recess: the dying man lies with his head to the left: two youths with clasped hands kneel before him, and a third stands on the further side next to a priest, who leans forward placing the lighted candle in the dying man's hands. A monk is seated at the bed head, pointing to Death with his scythe, who is at the foot of it. Behind the monk three demons are grouped, one of whom is engaged in reading from a large open book the enumeration of the dying man's sins. In mid distance, at the back, is the vision, in an aureole, with rays descending from it, of the Madonna holding the Infant Saviour, an angel on clouds being on either side. Copies of the last cut, and of some of the others, are in Dibdin's *Bibliographical Decameron* (i., 140-2). The treatise was written by Domenico Capranica, Cardinal of Fermo, and was first published at Florence in 1477 (Brunet, i., 502): it passed through several editions, the one we have under consideration being the first that was illustrated.¹

¹ In the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iv., 443) there is an account of another Italian version of the *Ars Moriendi*, in Gothic type. "Comincia el proemi dellarte del ben morire: cioe in gratia di dio: compilato et composto per reverendo padre Mon signore Cardinale di fermo. Anno dñi MCCCCLII. Stampado fo questa operetta dell arte del ben muorire cō li figure accomodati per Johannē clein e Piero himel de almania. Negli anni del signore MCCCCLXXX." The book is another transcript of the work compiled by the Cardinal of Fermo in 1452. No copies of the woodcuts it is illustrated with are given, and the number of them is not stated. Dibdin describes the first, on the reverse of the first leaf, as

One of the earliest of the Florence books, with woodcuts in its pages, is a republication of the “Monte Sancto di Dio,” containing woodcut copies of the three Botticelli prints:—“¶ Finito el diuoto & bello libro decto monte sancto di Dio composto dal diuoto & docto seruo di Giesu Christo frate Antonio da Siena pouero Giesuato Vescouo di Fuligno. ¶ Impresso nella inclita cipta di Firēze con somma diligentia per Ser Lorenzo de Morgiani & Giouanni thodesco da Maganza. A di. xx. di Marzo. m.cccc.xci.” On the frontispiece, which bears the following inscription at the top “Libro del monte di dio et del monte delle orationi et scala del paradiso diuotissimo et spirituale,” there is the representation of the Mount of Christ, with sundry variations from the copper-plate engraving, the throng of cherubim being replaced by an angel on each side, supporting the plain aureole surrounding the Saviour, and in the space above are two six-winged seraphs; the position of the monk and the youth is slightly changed, but the wording of the mottoes is the same. The second figure, of Our Saviour in a flamboyant aureole, preceding the “gloria del paradiso,” is nearly identical with the Botticelli engraving. The last of the three, the illustration of the Inferno, upright instead of oblong in form, occupies the reverse of leaf m . i . : the caverns are the same in their detail, but they are differently arranged, and some other demons are introduced. The woodcuts are somewhat rude but skilful of execution, and the backgrounds are in full shadow. Examples of the book are in the Library and in the Print Room of the British Museum.

“an elegant woodcut, evidently the composition of an Italian artist:—the picture of the Virgin and Child is upon an altar; before which a man and woman are, separately, in the act of confession,” and adds:—“the woodcuts in the body of the work (resembling those of which fac-similes are given by Heineken) must be understood to be the productions of Clein and Himel—which partake of the coarseness of their German origin—and not the frontispiece above described.”

The block, with the figure of Our Saviour in an aureole, was subsequently used for the frontispiece, being the only illustration, of “*Libro molto devoto ⁊ spirituale de fructi della lingua—Impresso infirēze appresso a sancta maria maggiore per Ser Lorenzo morgiani & Giouāni di Piero tedesco damaganza . Adi quatro di settembre . M.CCCC.LXXXIII.*”

In the year preceding that of the republication of the “*Monte Sancto di Dio*,” a 4to volume appeared:—“*Lavde di frate Iacopone da Todi—Impresse—per Ser Francesco Bonaccorsi In Firenze adi uentiotto del mēse di septēbre M.CCCCLXXX.*” It is one of the rarest of these early ornamented volumes of Florence; the single woodcut, occupying the entire page, slightly sketched in outline, is fully worthy of the pencil of Botticelli, the figure of the author, with his enrapt attention, being evidently a portrait. It is printed on the verso of the eighth leaf; frate Jacopone, with a glory around his head, kneels, with hands joined in prayer, in front of a reading-desk, which is raised on a dwarf pedestal; he looks up in adoration at a vision of the Madonna, in the centre of a radiated mandorla, surrounded by angels and cherubim. A copy of the volume is in the British Museum Library.

In 1491 a small treatise on Arithmetic, dedicated to Giuliano de’ Medici, was issued by the printers of the Monte Sancto di Dio. “*Philippi Calandri ad nobilem et studiosum Julianum Laurentii Medicē de arimethrica opusculū—Impresso nella excelsa cipta di Firenze per Lorenzo de Morgiani et Giouanni Thedesco da Maganza finito a di primo di Gēnaio 1491,*” illustrated with diagrams and cuts of trades, groups of animals, and other figures; the pages are surrounded by arabesque borders, very delicately drawn and executed; copies of several of them accompany the account of the book in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (vi., 94).

Antonio Miscomini was eminent, amongst the printers of Florence, during the years 1481-1495, for the beauty of his type and the care bestowed upon his publications. Savona-

rola's "Tractato dellhumilita cōposto p frate Hieronymo da Ferrara—Impresso in Firenze per Antonio Mischomini. Adi ultimo di giugno . M.CCCCLXXXII .", is the earliest of his illustrated books bearing a date wherein, on the recto of the first leaf, is the figure of Our Saviour sustained by two angels on the tomb, the treatment of the group having much of the character of Botticelli's drawing.

One of the most interesting examples from the press of Miscomini, issued in the same year, distinguished by the sharpness of the type and the carefulness of its printing, is the "Formulario di lettere & di orationi uolgari con la proposta & risposta cōposto p Christofano landini—Impressa in Firenze per maestro Antonio mischomini Anno salutis . M.CCCCLXXXII." The first letter in the volume is addressed by its learned author, the commentator upon Dante, "allo excelso & illustrissimo principe Signor Hercole da Esti dignissimo Duca di Ferrara," in the form of a dedicatory epistle to the duke. A large woodcut is on the title, occupying the full page, with the representation of Landino seated at a desk, engaged in teaching seven youths assembled in front of him. The drawing is full of animated action, and the woodcut is bright and distinct in its cutting. The reverse of the last leaf is occupied by the arabesque border, with eagles at the foot and tritons at the top, so frequently made use of for the books printed by Miscomini, whose device is in the centre of the page.

In the following year Miscomini published "Sermoni Volgari del Venerando doctore Sancto & Aurelio Augustino : padre della regola Heremitana, molto deuoti & spirituali ad acquistare la gloria del paradiso," with a portrait on the title, of the author, seated at a desk, composing his sermons, his bishop's mitre being by the side of the desk. The colophon, "Impresso in Firenze Per Maestro Antonio Miscomini Anno . M.CCCCLXXXIII. Adi. xxviii. di Givgno," has beneath it a print of Miscomini's device.

In another edition of the "Tractato della humilita" we

have the full-length figure of Our Saviour holding His Cross, His right hand being extended to the left, from the wound in which the blood drops into a sacramental chalice standing at His side. This figure of Our Saviour was first used for "*Joanni gerson vulgare: devota operetta della imitatione di Jesu Christo—Impresso in Firenze p maestro Antonio Mischomini Anno Salutis MCCCCLXXXIII Adi xxii di luglio.*" In "*Lo Specchio della vera penitentia*" (1495) we have a second full-length figure of Our Saviour standing supporting His Cross, a chalice being held in His right hand, receiving the blood flowing from the wound in His side: the block was again made use of in later volumes. The figure of Our Saviour bearing His Cross was introduced in Savonarola's "*Tractato della oratione.*" Amongst numerous designs of the Crucifixion, the most refined in its drawing and in the clearness of its cutting is in "*Operetta molto divota—sopra e dieci comandamenti di Dio directa alla Madonna a vero badessa del monasterio delle Murate di Firenze—Impresso in Firenze Adi xxv di Ottobre MCCCCLXXXV.*" The Crucified Saviour is upraised in the centre, between the Madonna and S. John standing on either side, the Magdalene being on her knees with her arms around the Cross. On the reverse of the title is a repetition of the upright illustration, printed from the block previously described, of Savonarola, accompanied by an attendant monk, addressing with earnest action the Abbess of the Murate and her nuns in the cloisters of their monastery. The cut of the crucified Saviour is repeated on the title of "*Lo Specchio della Cruce compilato da Frate Domenico Cavalcha da Vico pisano—Impresso in Firenze,*" without date or printer's name.

Contemporaneously, and evidently from the press of Miscomini, another small quarto volume, also without place or date, was issued, "*Incominciono ledivote meditationi sopra lapassione del nostro Signore chauate & fondate originalmente sopra sancto Bonaventura Chardinale del ordine de*

frati minori sopra Nicolao de Lira"—ending on the reverse of the last leaf, f 4, "Finite sono ledivote meditationi del nostro signor Giesu xpo." The representation of the Raising of Lazarus is at the commencement, followed by the entry of Our Saviour into Jerusalem, and other scenes of the Passion, ending with Our Saviour's Resurrection on the last page; the illustrations are the same in treatment, and evidently were engraved at the same period, as those of the "arte del ben morire." Dibdin attributes them to the commencement of the last decade of the fifteenth century: many of the blocks were subsequently used for the folio volume, "Epistole et Evangelii," printed in 1495. These small quarto volumes were the precursors, amongst numerous similar publications, of the series of "Rappresentationi sacre" which continued to be issued at Florence far into the sixteenth century, and are distinguished by the graceful vignettes their pages are ornamented with: an extensive collection of them is in the British Museum Library.

Woodcuts, with subjects of Death, are on the first page of two short treatises, the first entitled, "Io Sono il grā capitano della morte che tengo lechiani di tutte le porte"; and the second, of two leaves only, entitled, "La morte de Papa iulio con altre Barzelette cosa noua." In the first treatise, Death on the pale horse rides over men of all degrees, one of whom wears a mitre, prostrate on the ground. In the second, Death accompanied by several skeletons, stands in a car drawn by two oxen. A pamphlet, of four leaves, is of much interest in relation to the charges of heresy preferred against Dante, "Credoche Dante fece quando fu accusato per heretico allo Inquisitore essendo lui a Rauenna"; it has on the first page a small woodcut, with Dante standing holding an open book, pointing with his right hand to a vision of the Trinity in the sky, surrounded by an aureole, supported by four cherubim. On the frontispiece of a pamphlet, "La lettera dellisole che ha trouato nuouamente il Re dispagna—p messer Giuliano dati tradotta—a

di. xxvi. doctobre. 14.93. Florentie," there is a woodcut of the king seated in state upon a canopied throne, close to the sea: two vessels are seen with their sails set, and a crowd of naked men and women are in the boat by the shore of the newly-discovered island. Copies of the last two pamphlets are in the library of the British Museum.

An undated tract, also in the British Museum, of the same period is an edition of "*La Gran Magnificentia del prete Janni Signore dell india Maggiore della Ethiopia.*" Prester John, with the triple crown on his head, is on the first page, seated on a throne, in the midst of an assembly of cardinals and ecclesiastics, inscriptions being at their feet: a vine rises at the back of the throne, with Our Saviour on the Cross amidst its branches.

In the volume, "*Monte delle oratione. Impresso per Ser Frācesco Bonaccorsi al di x di Maggio, 1496,*" there are two illustrations, the size of the page, full of the character of Botticelli's drawing. In the first, Our Saviour in a radiance of glory, with His hands extended in benediction, is seated on the summit of a mountain, eleven of His Disciples being gathered on its side, engaged in various occupations, some with spades digging for treasure, which, in the teaching of the text, they are enjoined to search for, and deposit at the Master's feet. The second illustration is an Adoration of the Cross, with holy women surrounding it; the emblems of the Passion are introduced in the spaces at the sides.

A book upon chess is of great interest amongst the publications from the press of Miscomini, owing to the information respecting the costume and manners of the time, derivable from the numerous spirited vignettes in its pages, "*Libro di giuoco di Scacchi intitolato de costumi deglhuomini et degli offitii de nobili. Impresso in Firēze per maestro Antonio Miscomini Anno mccccclxxxiii Adi primo di marzo.*" The illustrations are all reproduced in the account of the book in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*

(vi., 5). V^{te}. Delaborde, in his "Gravure en Italie" (222), writes that he considers the design of some of the vignettes may be attributed to Botticelli, adding, that "the youthful elegance of the two players on the frontispiece, in the midst of a group of spectators, contesting the game under the eyes of a king, and the finesse wherewith, in the body of the work, the different characters are personified, recalls the spirited style and manner of the master, justifying the supposition that he was at least no stranger to the composition of these charming vignettes. They are, in fact, executed with an ease and gracefulness, which place them amongst the best specimens of the taste and talent, peculiar to the Florentine engravers in wood."

The most important of the illustrated books, connected with Savonarola's influence in Florence, is a small folio volume, "Epistole ⁊ Evangelii ⁊ Lectioni vulgari in lingua toschana;" the colophon, which precedes the two first leaves of the "Tavola," is on the reverse of p. viii., "Impresso nella inclyta citta di Firenze p Ser Lorēzo de morgiani & Giouāni di Magontia ad instātia di Ser Piero Pacini da Pescia. Anno domini M.CCCCLXXXV. Adi xxvii del mese di Luglio". From the thoughtfulness and the religious sentiment of the artistic drawing of the various scenes of Our Saviour's Life and Passion, which prevail throughout the book, there is every reason to assume that Botticelli materially aided in their production. The volume from which the description is taken is in the writer's possession, consisting of 122 leaves, including the title, followed by two leaves of "Tavola;" it has been injured by fire and water, and wants leaf a. vii. The blocks were used for several subsequent editions of the "Epistole."

The engraved frontispiece, occupying the first page, is a fine specimen of Florentine ornamentation. Dolphins are at the sides, and two chimerical griffins at the top sustain a vase between them, the pattern being completed with arabesque scroll work, white upon a black ground.

The "Master of the Dolphin," designated by M. Piot as the artist of many of these contemporary productions (*Cabinet de l'Amateur*, p. 353), might claim it as one of the most successful of his designs. A large circle surrounded by a border of coiled ribbon, is in the centre, wherein SS. Peter and Paul are represented standing in a rocky landscape. At the corners are square medallions, with half-length figures of the four Evangelists, accompanied by their emblems, and the composition is finished by an outer border of foliage and flowers. Nearly every page throughout the volume contains one or more woodcuts of incidents in New Testament history, many extremely beautiful in their drawing, impressions from the blocks used for the "*Meditationi sopra la passione del Nostro Signore*," previously mentioned, being amongst them.

Another contemporary volume, similar in character, but of much less artistic value, is, "*Epistole et Evangelii in vulgare storiæ composte in lingua Fiorentina. Finiscono lectioni e epistole et Evangelii che s'idocono p tutto l'anno secōdo l'ordine del messale impresso ī Firenze a di 24 doctobre MCCCCLXXXV*"; followed by an appendix of six leaves printed in the following year; "*Expositione sopra Evangelii*" is on a blank leaf at the commencement, with the colophon at the end: "*finite il quarto e ultimo libro delle expositiōi sopra evangelii per frate Simone da Cascia de frati heremitani. Impresse in Firenze p. Bartholomeo di Francesco p. fiorentino Adi xxiii di Settembre MCCCCLXXXVI.*" The volume is in the British Museum Library: it has numerous small cuts in outline throughout the text, in the style of the Venice books, many being marked with the letter N: the minuscule *h* is on a cut on the reverse of the first leaf. The subjects are from the New Testament, and an outline border, designed with children and birds, similar in character to one used in an edition of the "*Deche di Tito Livio*," 1493, described amongst the books printed at Venice, surrounds the first page of the "*Epistole*" and "*Expositione.*"

In the preceding notice of Botticelli's print of the Preaching of Fra Marco (p. 145), the small quarto volume "*Libro delli comandamenti di Dio*," printed by Miscomini, one year prior to the "*Epistole*" of 1495, has been described. In addition to the large woodcut of the Preaching of Fra Marco, two pages, faced to each other, contain different scenes from the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, of the delivery by Moses of the Lord's commands to the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. In the one, on the right, on leaf b. v, Mount Sinai, inscribed at the foot "*MONTE SYNAY*", is represented burning with jets of flame, the "thunders and lightnings—and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud," typical of the Lord's descent upon Mount Sinai, being figured by the summit of the mountain on fire, and the trumpet in the air at the side emitting flames at either end. Moses is on the hillside, and is a second time introduced at the bottom of the woodcut, placing boundary-stones, that the people should not go up into the Mount. On the opposite page, on the reverse of leaf b. IIII, "*DE-SERTO DE SYNA*" being inscribed at the foot of it, three scenes in separate divisions are represented: in the one at the top the tents of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai are on the left, and on the right the elders of the people are congregated, with Moses addressing them: in the centre compartment, on the left side of it, the Israelites are engaged washing their vestments, Moses being on the opposite bank of the brook, addressing another group of listeners: in the third division at the foot the Israelites are assembled "at the nether part of the mount," with Moses on the right speaking to them the commands of the Lord.

Amongst the books connected with Savonarola, is a volume of one of his sermons, published in 1496 "*Tractato di Maestro Domenico Benivieni Prete Fiorentino in difesa et probatione della doctrina et prophetie predicate da frate Hieronymo da Ferrara nella citta di Firenze—Impresso in Firenze per Ser Francesco Bonaccorsi Adi xxviii. di*

Maggio MCCCCLXXXVI." The treatise was written by Domenico Benivieni, the friend of Savonarola, to aid in stemming the reaction that had set in against him, and to preserve the account of one of the friar's sermons, wherein he narrated the particulars of a vision he had seen, in the night preceding Good Friday, 1496. The vision is delineated in a woodcut, the size of the page, on the reverse of f. III. The crucified Saviour is on a raised mound in the centre, with ten worshippers kneeling in adoration immediately at the foot of the cross: lower down other worshippers are bathing in the stream of blood flowing from the Saviour's wounds. Numerous groups are assembled on either side; in the distance, at the back, "IERVSALEM" is represented on the left, and "FIRENZE" and "ROMA" are on the right, the latter city being significantly enveloped in fire descending from Heaven.

The design has been attributed to Botticelli, and the sentiment of the composition, and the artistic arrangement of the scene, have all the character of his drawing, resembling in treatment the woodcut reproduction of the preaching of Fra Marco, in the "*Libro delli comandamenti di Dio*." One of the most graphic illustrations of the incidents of Savonarola's ministry, is a small woodcut on the title-page of the "*Tractato di Maestro Domenico Benivieni*." Benivieni, in a black robe, stands on the right, with his right hand upraised, and a closed book in the other, addressing with earnest gesture seven listeners, foremost amongst whom are a Franciscan and a Dominican monk, the latter in full black robe and hood; the five other listeners are richly costumed Florentine citizens; the group is represented in the cloisters of a monastery, with the buildings of Florence seen through the arches, and is extremely spirited in its drawing, and the animated expression of the figures of the assembled audience.

At the end of the same year another of Savonarola's sermons was published, from the notes of it taken by

Lorenzo Violi : “ Predica dellarte del bene morire facta dal reuerendo padre frate Hieronymo da Ferrara a di .ii. di Nouēbre .M.CCCCLXXXVI. & raccolta da Ser Lorenzo Violi dalla uiua uoce del p̄decto padre mentre cepredicaua,” with four illustrations the size of the page. In the first, upon the title, Death, bearing a scroll whereon is inscribed “EGO SVM” in reverse, is represented with his scythe, flying over the face of the earth, where the trees are leafless, and men of various degrees lie prostrate on the ground, a bishop with his mitre, and a crowned head, being amongst them; the figure of Death resembles the delineation of it in the fresco in the Campo Santo at Pisa. In the second illustration, Death and a youth stand on the upper curve of a circle; Satan and his demons are in the “Inferno” below, and Death holds, directed towards them, a scroll inscribed “OQVAGIV”; Our Saviour is in a glory above with angels at the side, to whom Death points with upraised hand, another scroll being over his head, inscribed “OQVA2V”. The two remaining cuts are copies from the death-bed scenes, the first and last, in the “arte del ben morire,” previously described, the latter being somewhat enlarged.

The text of the “Predica” is a sermon preached by Savonarola, on the 2nd November, 1496: the Florentines had been suffering from a great dearth of provisions, in consequence of a long-continued siege of Leghorn, when a storm scattered the ships of the besiegers, enabling provisions to be brought into the port, and the fears of famine and pestilence Florence had been threatened with were dispelled.

Noël Humphrey, in his “Masterpieces of the Early Printers and Engravers,” folio, London, 1870, gives copies of the cuts in the “Predica,” and pronounces the second death-bed scene to be a representation of Savonarola seated by the side of the dying Lorenzo de’ Medici. All the accessories are of a rich man’s chamber; there is nothing, however, to support the suggestion, and the original cut, in the

“arte del ben morire,” from which it is copied, was engraved, most probably, in Lorenzo de’ Medici’s lifetime.

Of the “Fiore di virtù,” first published at Venice, composed, according to Brunet, by Tomaso Leoni in 1320, an edition was printed at Florence in 1498, “Opera chiamata Fior di virtù, la quale tracta di tucti vitii humani, e insegna come se debba acquistar le virtù,” with a full-page representation of a monk in a garden, in the enclosure of the walls of his monastery, surrounded by birds and animals ; a tree is by either margin with birds on the branches, and a peacock is perched on a tower at the monk’s back. The ground, and the borders at the sides, are luxuriant with flowers, and the monk is engaged in gathering one, to add to the collection he has made in the fold of his dress held up by his left hand.

A treatise of much interest, in its relation to the religious influence S. Antonino, the celebrated Archbishop of Florence,¹ had exercised in the city many years prior to the advent of Savonarola, is, “Somma dello Arciuescouo Antonino Omnis mortalium cura. Confessionale uolgare intitolato Specchio di conscientia el quale e libro degno & utile a chi desidera di saluare lanima.” An edition was printed at Florence, at the expense of Ser Piero Pacini da Pescia, in 1507, which contains one of the most perfect of the beautiful vignettes the books of the time were adorned with, in illustration of the service of the confessional ; it represents the interior of a chapel supported by light springing arches,—a raised altar is in the centre, whereon is a statuary group of the Madonna and Child, with the sacred monogram “I H S” over the recess it is placed in. S. Antonino is seated on the left, having a radiant nimbus around his brow, with his hands on the head of a young monk kneeling at his feet, whose confession he is receiving ; another young monk is on his knees by

¹ The Archbishop died in 1459. In the “Antonino” chapel of the Annunciata there are frescoes of his burial.

the margin. On the left an Abbess is similarly occupied, confessing a young nun, two other nuns with clasped hands being on their knees at the side : a bright clear border, on a black ground, with dolphins at the top and foot, and arabesques at the sides, surrounds the composition. In another treatise, printed twelve years previously—"Tractato uolgare difrate Antonino arcivescouo di Firenze che e intitolato Curam illius habe. Impresso in firenze per Ser Lorenzo de morgiani & Ianni di Piero di magāza oggi questo di xxiii di maggio . M.cccc.lxxxiii."—S. Antonino is represented in the large vignette at the commencement, seated at a desk in his cell, engaged in writing his work, his mitre and staff being at the side of the desk : another illustration is in the volume, of S. Antonino in the act of giving his benediction to a penitent kneeling at his feet.

There is scarcely the record of the publication at Florence of any books of offices, or of the services of the Church, with illustrations in their pages, of which so many were printed by the Giuntas and the eminent printers at Venice, during the time ranging from 1490 to 1520. The demand for the works issued from the presses in the city throughout the period of Savonarola's ministration, was principally restricted to the numerous volumes of controversial theology, connected with the discussions society was disturbed with.

Towards the end of the century we find a marked change in the character of the books the printers were engaged in producing. Some of the most artistic illustrations that were executed appeared in the publications of the poetry, and of the secular literature of the time. The Fables of Æsop were extremely popular, and nearly in every city, where printing presses were established, editions of them were published. So early as 1479, one was printed at Verona, "Impressum Veronæ Die xxvi. Junii MCCCCLXXVIII," with very spirited woodcuts, somewhat rude of execution, surrounded with floreated borders ; the versified text is that of "Accii

Zuchi Summa Campanæ Veronensis in Æsopi Fabulas Interpretatio". Copies of several of the cuts are given in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (i., 229). The first illustrated Florence edition of the Fables is dated 1495, with the translation of Accius Zucco. Dr. Lippmann gives an account of it, from an imperfect copy in the Riccardi Library: "Impresso in Firenze per Ser Francesco Bonaccorsi ad instantia di Ser Piero Pacini Anno Domini MCCCCLXXXV. Adi xvii di Settembre", and states that the woodcuts, improved in their drawing and execution, are copied from the Verona volume.

In evidence of the reaction that ensued, in speedy succession, on the death of Savonarola, an edition of the *Morgante Maggiore* of Ludovico Pulci made its appearance in Florence, in the last year of the century, with vignettes in its pages. The volume is excessively rare, and we are indebted to Dr. Lippmann for the particulars he gives of it from the copy in the Imperial Library at Vienna. The first edition of Pulci's Poem, with all the freedom of its language, had been printed in 1481, at the press of the convent of Ripoli at Florence, some of the nuns having acted as compositors. The spirited action of the poem afforded the artist rich materials for his pencil, and the edition of 1500—"finito illibro chiamato *Morgāte maggiore* composto per Luigi pulci. Impresso in Fireze nel Anno mcccc adi xxii di Gennaio,"—contains upwards of two hundred woodcuts, thoroughly Florentine in their drawing. In the same year most probably was printed "*Nuella piacenole chiamata la Viola,—con due Sonetti & una canzona,*" with one vignette only at the commencement, where Viola is seated at supper with the "*tre Giovani suoi inamorati.*"

We conclude our remarks upon these Florence volumes with the notice of one of the most elaborate of the imitations of the *Divina Commedia*: "*Quatrigio interza rima uolgare che tracta di quatro Reami cioe del Reame temporale*

& mondano di questo mondo nel quale Lauctore rimane ingannato dallo Idio del lamore quatro uolte. Dipoi tracta del Reame di Plutone Re dellinferno. Et del Purgatorio terzo Reame & del Paradiso cioe del Reame della uirtu che-e-el Quarto.—Finisce ellibro decto Quatre regio del decorso della uita humana di messer Federico gia uescouo della cipta di Fuligno eximio maestro in sacra theologia frate del ordine di Sācto Domenico con somma diligētia emendato. Impresso ī Firēze adi xxvi. di Luglio M.D.VIII.” (Brunet, ii., 1395). The book was written by Federigo Frezzi, Bishop of Foligno, and was first published at Perugia in 1481, followed by an edition at Florence, where it was extremely popular. The poem is a long prosaic composition, written upon the model of the *Divina Commedia*, divided into four books, descriptive of the kingdoms of Cupid, Satan, Vice, and Virtue. Dr. Dibdin (*Bibl. Spenc.*, iv., 119), in a short account of the first edition, comparing it with a contemporary volume, the “*Dellamondo di Fazio degli liberti*,” quotes a notice from the “*Quarterly Review*” (vol. xi., 25), where it is described as possessing a tolerable share of poetical merit, but that the mystical subject of it, encumbered with all the heavy dulness of the fashionable theology, appears to render it scarcely worthy of preservation. The edition, however, of which we give the account, has the attraction of being ornamented with one hundred and twenty-five illustrations in the style and of the size of those in the “*Rappresentationi sacre*.” V^{te}. Delaborde, in his “*Gravure en Italie*” (p. 213), states, in his account of these illustrations, that “they evoke the remembrance of Botticelli, and the influence he exercised upon the painters and engravers of his time: we will not venture to say that with his own hand he made the designs, but he paved the way for them by his example, if he did not directly participate in them.” Adding in a note that “the intervention of Botticelli is far more probable than that of Luca Signorelli, whose name has sometimes been adduced in connection

with the illustrations of the “Quatriregio.” Signorelli’s usual style does not sustain such an attribution, notwithstanding the argument that the letters L. V. upon the first illustration are to be interpreted as the initials of *Luca Ventura* (Luca Signorelli was the son of Egidio Ventura Signorelli); but he never, to our knowledge, affixed the signature ‘Luca Ventura’ to his works.”

The illustrations of the “Quatriregio” have much of the crispness and vigour of manner characteristic of the school of Filippo Lippi, and of the influence exercised by Botticelli; but there is a considerable distinction between them, and the spirited compositions of the last decade of the fifteenth century, inspired as were the artists of them by the religious enthusiasm Savonarola’s preaching had created.

The last quarter of the fifteenth century, or rather the portion of it ending in 1492, owing to the comparative tranquillity then reigning in Italy, is memorable for the diffusion of learning, and the appreciative interest that had arisen in every branch of art and skilled workmanship. The different communities were occasionally disturbed by intestine conspiracies, and quarrels with their neighbours: but a general increase of prosperity, through the improvement of trade and agriculture, was shared in by all classes, and their rulers, in the endeavour to strengthen the stability of their power, vied with each other in aiding the progress of knowledge and the pursuits of peace. The position maintained by Florence was due to the administrative ability of the family of the Medici, who through several generations held distinguished rank in the councils of the government, in which they were sustained by the esteem they were held in by their fellow citizens, owing to the example of their lives, in their earnest exertions for the public benefit, and the patriotic outlay they made of their private fortunes.

Giovanni de’ Medici, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, was renowned for his benevolence, and

the abnegation of his own aggrandizement, in his endeavours to promote the political advancement of the interests of the Republic. On his death, in 1428, he was succeeded by his son Cosimo, who, after a temporary banishment, was recalled to Florence by general acclamation, and throughout the thirty years of his life succeeding his return, sustained the state in undisturbed power and pre-eminence by his wise and energetic authority. The extensive monetary transactions he was engaged in greatly enhanced the commerce of Florence, and the wealth he accumulated was applied unsparingly for the general welfare. Devoted to the pursuits of literature, Cosimo de' Medici gathered around him the celebrities of the time distinguished for their learning. Continued expenditure was made in the improvement of the public buildings of the city, and the endowment of its ecclesiastical and charitable institutions: he erected at vast expense the monastery of S. Marc, and made large purchases of MSS. of the ancient Greek and Latin writers, to be placed on the shelves of its library. The well-deserved title of "*Pater Patriæ*," inscribed on a porphyry slab over his grave, in front of the high altar of San Lorenzo, was bestowed upon him by a public decree, and records the universal respect he was held in.

The death of Cosimo de' Medici occurred on the 1st of August, 1464, when he was succeeded by his son Pietro, who did not long survive him, and in 1469 Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo, in his twenty-first year, became the head of the family; the statesmanship wherewith he upheld its dignity justified the laudatory title he subsequently was known by. Young although he was, he proved himself thoroughly competent to bear the responsibility which had fallen upon him. On the day after his father's death a deputation of the principal inhabitants of Florence waited upon him, with the request that he would assume the position his father had held: his management of the difficult duties he had undertaken, and of the complicated intrigues against

himself and the Republic, promoted by the profligate Sixtus IV., confirmed the correctness of the estimate that had been formed of his diplomatic talent. With the liberality of his ancestors, his wealth was used in the adornment of the city; the painters and sculptors assembled within its walls were kept in continuous employment, and advantage was taken of every opportunity for increasing the treasures of art that had been brought together.

Such leisure as Lorenzo could gain from the affairs of government was applied to the investigation of the MSS. of the writers of antiquity, the search for them being eagerly continued for enriching the library his grandfather had founded, and his time was passed in the society of the accomplished scholars his companions; amongst them were the learned tutors of his youth, Marsilio Ficino, the writer upon Plato, and Cristoforo Landino, the commentator of Dante, and his confidential associate Angelo Poliziano, to whom was entrusted the education of his sons; for early in life, in June, 1469, he had married Clarice, the daughter of Giacompo Orsini, whose acquaintance he made on a visit to the imperial city in 1466: from the expressions in his letters we learn the strong bond of affection that existed between them, and their mutual interest in the careful training of their children. The study of the Platonic philosophy was one of the principal subjects of discussion at the meetings of Lorenzo and his friends;—the taste for it was inherited from Cosimo de' Medici, who devoted himself to its investigation, and his grandson had been trained in its tenets. The elucidation of the hidden meanings of the *Divina Commedia* was another favourite theme of discussion, resulting in the publication of Landino's elaborate commentary in 1481. Of the share Lorenzo had taken in its compilation, and the high standard of his own classical knowledge, we derive interesting particulars from his poems and other writings.

The formidable conspiracy of the Pazzi in 1478, in which

Lorenzo's brother Giuliano was killed, aroused very general indignation, and the citizens evinced their support of the cause of the Medici by their vigorous pursuit of the assassins, whom they hung from the windows of the Pazzi Palace, the Archbishop of Pisa, Francesco Salviati, being suspended by the side of Francesco de' Pazzi, in the robes he wore at the altar at the time of the murder.

The remainder of Lorenzo's life was passed in comparative tranquillity, and the city was saved from further disturbance. Before he had finished his forty-fourth year he was carried off by a slow fever, at his villa at Careggi on the 8th of April, 1492, and with the loss of their ruler the golden age of the Florentines passed away, and war and rapine and tumult speedily dispelled the prosperity they had been in the enjoyment of from the commencement of the century.

On the 11th August following Lorenzo's death Roderigo Borgia was elected to the Papacy by the title of Alexander VI. The reckless depravity of the new Pope, and the feuds he promoted for the aggrandisement of his family, followed by the invasion of the French in 1494, succeeded soon afterwards by the intervention of the German Emperor and of the Spaniards, involved the whole country in general warfare.

The religious and political disturbances Florence became agitated with, occasioned a total change in its constitution and its social life. The learned society which had been brought together, and the assemblage of sculptors and painters, and of the students working under their guidance, who had been received with free access for study in the galleries of the palace, were broken up and dispersed. The shameless treachery of Lorenzo's son and successor Pietro, in his negotiations with the French king, roused the Republican spirit of the citizens to a climax; Pietro and his brothers were expelled from the city in November, 1494, and the pursuits of peace had to give place to far different occupations, in the

struggle which for some years ensuing Florence had to maintain for existence. The ducal palace was sacked, and the priceless treasures which had been brought together with scrupulous taste of selection were scattered and destroyed. The Florentines, to commemorate their gratification at the overthrow of the family which had so long reigned over them, and with enlightened prudence had advanced the state to the commercial and social prosperity it was in the enjoyment of, took possession of Donatello's statue of Judith, and placed it on a pedestral before the gate of the Palazzo Vecchio, with the inscription : " Exemplum salutis publicæ cives posuere, MCCCCXCV."





CHAPTER XII.

FRANCESCO SQUARCIONE. ANDREA MANTEGNA.



IN passing from the consideration of the advance that had been made, and of the recognized position the art of engraving had arrived at, in its development in the works of Botticelli and of the painter-engravers in Florence, we have to turn our attention to Padua and its great painter Andrea Mantegna, in our examination of the further progress that was taking place in Italy in its exercise.

FRANCESCO SQUARCIONE.

The foster-parents of Andrea Mantegna in his youth were Francesco Squarcione, with his indebtedness to Donatello for the inspiration derived from the sculptor's works in San Antonio at Padua, where they both were resident during the years those works were in progress, and Jacopo Bellini, the pupil and companion of the accomplished Gentile da Fabriano. Andrea Mantegna in his tenth year was, in 1441, admitted as a pupil, and educated in the school of painting established by Francesco Squarcione, who was born in Padua in 1394, his father Giovanni being a notary of the city. According to the account given by Scardeonius in his work "*De antiquitate Urbis Pataviæ*," Bâle, 1560: "Francesco Squarcione was attracted to the study of painting before he came to manhood, and he had scarcely left

the school forms, as he himself has written, than he determined to see the world and visit distant countries. In this wise he became acquainted with the provinces of Greece, whence he brought back useful reminiscences and memoranda." His travels extended throughout the circuit of Italy; he delighted to communicate what he knew to others, and in the course of his career he taught, as he informs us, no less than 137 pupils, and won the name of the father of painters. He was a man of acknowledged judgment in all matters of art, instructing youths by placing before them models and panels, which Vasari tells us were casts from the antique, or pictures imported from various places, chiefly from Tuscany and Rome.

On the death of his father in 1422, Squarcione, in his twenty-eighth year, succeeded to a respectable inheritance in Padua, and in the same year he bought a house and five fields in the district of Ponte Corvo. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their "*History of Painting in North Italy*" (i., 294), reduce to a very insignificant level the position Squarcione held in the history of art; overlooking the account given by Scardeonius, that prior to his father's death, at the time before he came to manhood, he had been attracted to the study of painting, they state "that he inherited from his father so much as enabled him to pursue the trade of a tailor and embroiderer." In a subsequent passage they add that "he was certainly settled in 1423 at Padua, keeping shop as a tailor and embroiderer, after the death of his father." From his position as the notary's son, and his pursuits when "he had scarcely left the school forms," there is nothing to support the statement that he had taken to tailoring. The only authority for such a suggestion is their interpretation of a remark in a document dated 29th Dec., 1423, given by G. A. Moschini, in his book "*Della origine e delle vicende della pittura in Padova*" (1826). The following is a translation of the passage in Moschini: "It appears that the father died about 1422: in which year

one reads in the public registry that Francesco, after his father's death, bought a house and five fields in the district of Ponte Corvo. And on the 29th Dec., 1423, there is the following entry by Bartolommeo, a notary of the public records : ' M Franciscus Squarzonus sartor et recamator filius q(uondam) s(enioris) Joannis Squarzoni Notarii civis et abitator Padue in contracta Pontis Corvi.' Subsequent to this date we have no entry of the name of Francesco Squarzone until 1439, when we read from the acts of the same notary Bartolommeo, that one Pietro Fabo declares himself his debtor, in 55 lire and 15 soldi, for a cross and other things painted for him for the town of Terrassa. Afterwards we find him mentioned in the public records of Fraglia, from 1441 to 1463, respecting various matters relating to his art."

The shop, the inheritance derived from his father had enabled him to open, was kept, as were many others by the goldsmiths and painters in the city, and the professional trade that was conducted in it became amplified into one of considerable extent ; but it was the *bottega* of the artist—the open *atelier* in the quarter of the town resorted to as a lounge by its wealthy citizens, such as we see in the street of Florence in the print of the Planet Mercury. The sculptors and workers in the precious metals in the towns of Italy so pursued their calling ; and many of the painters, as we know was done by Francia, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and others the artists of their time, plied their vocation at these open marts for their products. Squarcione's occupation in carrying out the commissions he received was no doubt conducted under similar conditions of publicity. The manufacture and restoration of the processional *gonfaloni* and *baldacchini*, and the decoration of the ecclesiastical robes of ceremony and other furniture of the churches, was a material source of income to the artists in Italy in the fifteenth century, and one of the principal occupations of the youths who frequented Squarcione's

studio, an occupation to which the designation given to Squarcione in the notarial extract was applicable. These various products had first to be painted, and then handed to the embroiderer, and, from the fine thread they were worked with, very beautiful specimens were produced, requiring frequent restoration by the "sartor et recamator." Vasari, in his lives of the Florentine artists, gives account of their employment in making them. The great cost of this beautiful needlework occasioned its abandonment in after years, and the painted canvas was alone used, without the added embroidery. In the sacristy of San Giovanni at Florence they have preserved in frames some fine pieces of *brocatello*, fragments of priests' vestments, which were designed by Antonio del Pollajuolo: Vasari (iii., 299) mentions that he executed for San Giovanni two dalmaticas, which were embroidered by Paolo da Verona, the most subtle master of that art, twenty-six years having been occupied in their completion. And Botticelli, as Vasari tells us in his life of him (iii., 323), invented a method of preparing standards and other draperies with inlaid work, by inserting the cloths or silks, of different colours, in pieces, the baldacchino of Orsanmichele having been made by his hand; the embroidered friezes for the cross carried in procession by the friars of Santa Maria Novella were all likewise from his design.

Squarcione was admittedly engaged more in instruction than in painting, and in directing the execution by his pupils of the commissions entrusted to him. Only two pictures generally believed to be of his workmanship are known:—an altar-piece of S. Jerome in the Communal Gallery of Padua, and a Madonna in the house of the Lazzara family, both painted for Leone de Lazzara about 1452; the first is an inferior picture and much injured; the second, inscribed "Opus Squarcioni pictoris," of higher quality, has much of the character of Mantegna's painting.

A coarse satirical print (P. v., 117, 86), directed against

Judaism, is marked with the letters s. e. Zani, in his "Materiali" (p. 60), interpreted these letters to be the first and last of Squarcione's name, and consequently designated him as the engraver of the print; it is extremely scarce, and, from its having been long exhibited in the Uffizi at Florence, has attracted attention; but there is no authority for the attribution of such a vulgar worthless caricature to Squarcione. V^{te}. Delaborde, in his "Gravure en Italie" (104), gives an account of it, and remarks that Squarcione was of too refined a taste, and too cultivated a spirit, to have been guilty of the gross work which had been attributed to him. A copy of the print, by Daniel Hopper, is in the British Museum.

The allegation that Squarcione appropriated to himself the credit of his pupils' skill, and, instead of their signatures, required his own to be written on their pictures, is refuted by the knowledge we have, that Andrea Mantegna, in his seventeenth year, signed with his name in full the picture he painted in 1448 for the church of S. Sophia. The far more credible account of Squarcione's relationship to his scholars is, that they lived together in friendly intercourse, and that according to their talent he apportioned his commissions amongst them.

The strictness of attention exacted to the classical models he taught from induced a severe precision of drawing, highly beneficial to the students he trained, and the appreciation he was held in, and the regard they entertained for him, is shown by the "discipulus Squarcioni" added by many to their signatures. Several of Marco Zoppo's pictures are signed "Zoppo di Squarcione," and in the Berlin Museum and the National Gallery of London there are similar signatures by Gregorio Schiavone. During some years, after Andrea Mantegna's departure from Padua, the school which had been established in the city was sustained in its practical efficiency under its eminent founder. Squarcione's superintendence of the numerous pupils who resorted

to him for guidance continued until his death in 1474, and the principles he inculcated retained a strong pervading influence upon art in North Italy, far into the sixteenth century.

ANDREA MANTEGNA.

The great exponent of Squarcione's teaching was Andrea Mantegna. Born in 1431, of poor parents in the neighbourhood of Padua, he was, when a lad of ten years old, taken charge of by Squarcione, and his name was entered, in 1441, on the register of painters in Padua, by the designation of "Andrea fiulo di M. Francesco Squarcon depentore." How diligently the youth responded to his patron's selection is attested by the inscription on the picture we have mentioned, completed in his seventeenth year, "Andreas Mantinea Pat. an. septem et decem natus sua manu pinxit MCCCCXLVIII." This early work has long since disappeared. Over the central door of the west front of San Antonio a fresco Mantegna painted of SS. Antonio and Bernardino sustaining the sacred monogram, dated 1452, is still extant, but much injured. For a considerable period the relationship between the master and his pupil went on without interruption, and the assistance of the talented son of his adoption was of material aid to Squarcione in carrying out the works he was employed upon. The master's qualifications as an instructor, and the pupil's indebtedness to him for his education, not only in painting, but for the knowledge of languages and other branches of literature he acquired, are shown in the repute Mantegna was held in amongst the scholars of Padua. On frequent occasions he was the companion of Felice Feliciano in his researches, and was commended by him in high terms of praise for his linguistic attainments: the learned antiquarian's work on ancient epigrams was dedicated to Mantegna.

The important occupation Mantegna was engaged in during his early years, was the decoration of the chapel of S. Christopher, in the church of the Eremitani in Padua. The chapel had belonged to the Ovetari family, and in 1443 Antonio Ovetari left by his will 700 ducats to be expended by his heir Jacopo Leoni in the decoration of the walls of the apse with scenes from the lives of SS. James and Christopher: for carrying out the expenditure the services of Squarcione were engaged, and Mantegna was selected, with other pupils, to paint the frescoes. In one, of the Death of S. Christopher, Mantegna introduced his own portrait as a young soldier leaning on his spear, his master Squarcione being represented in the same group, costumed in a green tunic. The preparatory ornamentation of the architectural details must previously have made much progress, when Mantegna was placed upon his portion of the work: the picture he had so successfully executed for Santa Sophia proved his competency, notwithstanding his youth, for the commission entrusted to him. His fellow-student and associate, Niccolo Pizzolo, who painted the Assumption of the Madonna over the high altar, came to an untimely end in a street brawl, so that the side decorations, to a material extent, lapsed into Mantegna's hands.

During the ten years that followed, his time was mainly occupied with the task he had undertaken, which was not finally completed until 1460. Objections are said to have been raised by Squarcione to the severe statuesque forms, modelled, as it were, from the clay, of the actors in the scenes of the frescoes: the master's own teaching, however, has to be accredited with the occasion for any such complaint. A far more intelligible reason for dissatisfaction between them, was the jealousy created by the pupil's visits to the rival school of painting in the city.

Jacopo Bellini, about the year 1440, or somewhat later, established his studio in Padua, where he was resident throughout the ensuing twenty years. The incidents of his

career are closely connected with that of Andrea Mantegna. Born in Venice, in the beginning of the century, Jacopo Bellini early in life became a pupil of Gentile da Fabriano : having accompanied his master to Florence in 1422, he remained there with him for two years on terms of friendship, when a quarrel and fight in self-defence with a notary's son, followed by imprisonment, as recorded in the Florence archives under the date of October, 1424, from which Jacopo Bellini obtained his discharge, with the penalty of a public penance in San Giovanni, caused him to leave the city in disgust, and he returned to Venice.

In the Print Room of the British Museum there is a volume of considerable interest, full of Jacopo Bellini's pencil sketches, about a hundred in number ;¹ the front of the blank leaf, at the commencement, is inscribed in an old handwriting, "De mano de m[esser] iacobo bellino ueneto, 1430 In uenetia," indicating that in 1430 Jacopo Bellini was resident in Venice. After an intermediate visit to Verona, Jacopo Bellini about 1440 took up his abode, accompanied by his sons and daughter, in Padua. The attractions of the daughter Nicolosia, to whom Andrea Mantegna was married in 1455, and the companionship with her young brothers in their father's house, must have afforded a bright change to Mantegna from the discipline in his master's studio, and exercised an inspiring influence upon the unvarying classical character of drawing his pencil had been restricted to.

Besides the frescoes of the Eremitani chapel, Mantegna painted in these early days a picture of S. Luke, in 1452, now in the Brera at Milan, and another of S. Euphemia, in 1454, which is in the National Museum at Naples ; An Agony in the Garden, in the Baring collection in London, is con-

¹ The volume was purchased at Venice, in the present century, by the late Mr. Rawdon Brown for the British Museum : there is an interesting record of its pedigree in the account books of the Print Room.

sidered to have been painted prior to Mantegna's departure from Padua. He had accepted a commission from Gregorio Corraro, the abbot of San Zeno at Verona, for an altar-piece for his church, and with loyal conscientiousness and ardent interest in the subject, he resisted all attempts to induce him to postpone its completion. Throughout the years 1458-9, Mantegna, whilst engaged upon it, passed a considerable portion of the time at Verona, as we learn from his correspondence with the Marquis Lodovico Gonzaga, preserved amongst the archives of Mantua.¹

The altar-piece, in six compartments, was one of the noblest examples of art at the time; no other easel picture of equal magnitude and importance was undertaken by Mantegna. It was placed in San Zeno, and continued undisturbed until the inroad of the French in 1797, when it was removed, with the rest of the plunder of the Italian cities, to the French capital; the centre portion, of the enthroned Madonna, and the two volets, have been restored to Verona; two of the compartments of the predella, of Our Saviour's Agony in the Garden, and of His Assumption, were transferred to, and are still at, Tours; the sixth, of the Crucifixion, remains in the Louvre; copies of the three last occupy the places of the originals at Verona. Besides the beauty of the Madonna, with the Infant Saviour standing on her knee, never did artist bring together a more lovely group of infant choristers than the angel children, singing with the opened mouths of their cherub faces their song of joy at the foot of the throne. In either volet four saints, life size, depicted with dignified expressiveness, are ranged in retreating line, in front of highly decorated massive architecture, SS. Peter, Paul, and John the Evangelist, and S. Augustine with his mitre and crosier, being on the left, and S. John the Baptist, S. Zeno Bishop of Verona, and SS.

¹ The letters are printed in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (xx., pp. 318-478.

Lawrence and Benedict on the right. The painting of the Crucifixion, in the Louvre, is full of the deepest pathos and grandeur ; it is as if the scene had been stayed and petrified in its intense solemnity, at the moment we behold it.

Lodovico Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, became acquainted with the young artist's talent, and so early as 1456 offered him an appointment in his service. During the three ensuing years the negotiation was pending, and eventually, on the completion of his engagements at Padua and Verona, terms were agreed upon, and, towards the close of 1459 or early in 1460, Mantegna removed, with his young wife and family, to Mantua, which became the city of his adoption, and the remainder of his days were passed there.

The family of the Gonzagas was dominant in Mantua at the commencement of the fourteenth century, and in 1326 the Emperor Louis of Bavaria created Luigi Gonzaga its Imperial vicar. The stability of his power was promoted by his politic abstention from encroachment upon the neighbouring states, and by his sagacious management, which was continued by his successors, of the extensive territory subject to his government.

Francesco Gonzaga, whose reign extended from 1407 to 1444, greatly enhanced the general prosperity and influence of his dominion, and, in the year preceding his death, the Emperor Sigismond raised Mantua to the dignity of a Marquisate. On the accession, in 1444, of Francesco's son Lodovico to the inheritance, the finances of the country were in a condition of great productiveness, and the Court of Mantua became renowned for its patronage of art and literature, and for its munificence and hospitality.

From the outset of Mantegna's engagement, the association with Lodovico Gonzaga assumed the relationship of confidential intimacy ; the letters that passed between them, preserved in the archives of Mantua, apprise us that Mantegna was employed at Goito, in the service of the Marquis, in 1463, and the panels for a chapel and the

decoration of one of the rooms in the castle of Cavriana, are mentioned in a letter from Mantegna of the 26th April, 1464. The triptych of the Adoration of the Magi, now in the Uffizi, is attributed to the same date ; it was painted for a chapel of the Gonzagas, and in after years was sold to Antonio de' Medici, prince of Capistrano.

In 1466 Mantegna was sent to Florence upon some affair of trust in his master's service. Amongst the letters in the correspondence there is one referred to by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle ("Painting in North Italy," i., 385), dated 5th July, 1466, from Giovanni Aldobrandini, the agent at Florence of the Marquis, to whom it is written. The text is given in "*Delle Arte e degli Artifici di Mantova. Carlo d'Arco.*" 4to. Mantova, 1857-8 (vol. ii., p. 12), the following being an extract from it :—"Through Andrea Mantegna, I received a few days ago a letter from your illustrious Lordship : I did not forward my reply by him, knowing he would have to make many stoppages on the road, and herewith I send my excuses that I did not pay him and his companion Jeronimo so much attention as I could have desired, as they seem to me most excellent persons, and I perceived that Andrea, not only in painting, but in many other things, was possessed of perfect knowledge and consummate intelligence and deserved from me the highest commendation."

In Florence Mantegna appears to have remained for some time, and an application from him to the Duke, on the 2nd December following, for a hundred ducats for an outlay upon his house, tells us of his being again settled at Mantua.

During this sojourn in Florence in 1466, Mantegna acquired the knowledge of the process of Finiguerra's discovery, which a few years previously had been brought into operation by the Florentine artists. The prints of the Planets, published some time prior to Mantegna's visit, had from their novelty attracted general attention. Mantegna, whilst in residence in the city, evidently availed himself of

the opportunity to make himself master of the technical skill employed in their production; his interest in the originality of their treatment, and in their clever drawing, energetic as he was in all the appliances of his art, was, very speedily after his return to Mantua at the end of the year, amplified into a profitable source of revenue, as we learn from the means he adopted for the protection of his engravings.

Mantegna was frequently embroiled in lawsuits and quarrels with his neighbours; we read of his being so with one of them on account of the loss of the quinces from his garden, and with another because of the abusive language of his scolding wife. The tacit impunity wherewith his high-handed method of dealing with his fellow-citizens was left unrestrained, recently received illustration in the discovery, made by Herr Karl Brun, of a document amongst the archives of Mantua, and published under the title of "*Neue Dokumente über Andrea Mantegna*," in the "*Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*," vol. xi., Leipzig, 1875-6. The importance of the document is so material in relation to the history of engraving in Italy, that we give a translation of it. The heading of the paper is partially destroyed, and the date at the end is obliterated. It is entitled: "Simone de Ardizoni di Reggio, painter to the Marquis Lodovico Gonzaga" (the paper is here torn): "your Lordship, in what manner I have been treated in your city, and to tell you that I am named Simone di Ardizoni da Rezo, painter and engraver with the burin. When Andrea Mantegna came to Mantua he made me many offers, saying he was my friend, and I, having a long time ago formed an acquaintance with Zoan Andrea, painter of Mantua, talking with him, he told me he had been robbed of engraved plates ('*stampe*'), drawings, and medals, which moved me to compassion for his having been so badly treated. I told him I would remake the plates, and I had been working for him about four months, when the infuriated Andrea Mantegna, knowing I was remaking them, sent to threaten me, by a Florentine,

swearing that he would not suffer it. And besides this, one evening Zoan Andrea and I were assaulted by the nephew of Carlo Moltone and upwards of ten armed men, and left for dead, as I can prove. Moreover, in order that the said work should not proceed, Andrea Mantegna has found some villains to aid him by accusing me of unnatural crimes and sorcery. My accuser is named Zoan Luca da Novara, and the notary of my accuser is a relation of Carlo Moltone. Being a foreigner I was forced to fly, and I am now staying in Verona for the purpose of finishing the plates. Wherefore, my Lord, to maintain my honour, I wish your Excellency to know in what manner foreigners are treated in your city, and if your Excellency will have him who charged me with such villainy arrested, you will discover who it was that caused me to be accused. Wherefore, my Lord, I pray your Excellency to make such a demonstration of justice, that neither I nor my relations may be tempted to avenge ourselves. For believe me, if you search through forty cities you will not find anything to be said against my name. Now, however, Andrea Mantegna, with his pride and powerful influence at Mantua, ["has made this charge"], and if your Lordship does not oblige him to keep to his house great scandal will ensue. Humbly I commend myself to your Lordship. Verona, Simon di Regio : on the 15"—(the paper is here destroyed). "To the most illustrious and excellent Lord Lodovico Marquis of Mantua. To my good Lord at Mantua."

Whatever may have been the merits of the case, we learn that Andrea Mantegna resented the trade which had been carried on in the piracy of his prints, and that, having in the first instance taken the law into his own hands and seized the plates already engraved, he next resorted to the summary process of causing personal chastisement to be administered to Zoan Andrea and his assistant Simone de' Ardizoni, followed up by the charge against the latter complained of in his memorial addressed from Verona, whither he had

prudently fled, to escape from his enraged accuser's powerful influence in Mantua.

We have no record of the dates of Andrea Mantegna's engravings, or of the time of his employment in their production, unless a remark in a letter to the Marquis Lodovico of the 28th June, 1468, respecting a work he was engaged upon—"una istoria del libro"—has reference to them. But we learn, from the proceedings taken for putting a stop to the making copies of his prints, that the technical knowledge, acquired by Mantegna in Florence in 1466, had been perfected and brought into active operation some time prior to the death of the Marquis in 1478.

To the period contemporary with the production of the triptych of the Adoration of the Magi in the Uffizi, painted, as it is supposed, in 1464, belong two pictures in the Berlin Museum, one of the Madonna holding the Infant Saviour surrounded by angels, the other of the Madonna presenting the Infant Saviour to Simeon; and the S. George in armour in the Accademia at Venice, and the Martyrdom of S. Sebastian in the Belvedere at Vienna are attributed to the same time. In July of 1472 we hear of Mantegna's antiquarian knowledge being brought into requisition, from a visit he paid to Lodovico Gonzaga's son, the cardinal Francesco, at Bologna, to investigate a collection he had formed of gems and antiquities: Mantegna returned after a fortnight's stay, and for some continuous time he was engaged at the Palace in Mantua, decorating its walls with the frescoes of the groups of his patron's family. Subsequent to 1474 he painted the majestic representation of the Maries lamenting over the Body of Our Saviour, now in the Brera at Milan,—the Death of the Madonna, where the Apostles are arranged in groups around her couch, in the Museum at Madrid,—and the small monochrome of two Sibyls, in the National Gallery in London.

The changes that took place in Mantua at the end of 1478 did not affect Mantegna's position. His friend the

Marquis Lodovico died in that year, and his son and successor Federico, with whom, from his childhood, Mantegna had been acquainted, proved to be even a still more liberal patron than the father had been. The painter's improvident mode of living obliged him to appeal for assistance to the young Marquis, who paid his debts, and for the six years of his reign gave Mantegna continued employment in the decoration of the ancestral home of the family at Gonzaga, besides numerous other commissions. Federico's premature death in 1484 put an end to this state of prosperity, and we again hear of the difficulties Mantegna was involved in.

The warlike pursuits of the young Gian Francesco, who succeeded to the Marquisate in 1484, and his repeated absences from his capital upon the foreign expeditions he embarked in, left him but little time for the pursuits of peace. In 1485 he married Isabella, daughter of the Duke of Este, and in that year Mantegna painted a Madonna, half length, for the young Marchioness, which is identified as the picture, formerly in the collection of the late Sir Charles Eastlake, now in the Dresden Gallery. With the exception of Mantegna's engagement upon the series of the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, commenced in 1485, in response to the military taste of his new employer, almost the only other commission given to him by Gian Francesco we have the account of, is the altar-piece of the Madonna of Victory, now in the Louvre, with portraits of the Marquis and his wife kneeling at the foot of the throne. It was painted to commemorate the so-called victory of Gian Francesco over the French at Tornavo, on the banks of the Taro, on the 6th July, 1495, and having been taken to Paris by Napoleon, the picture was not returned.

In 1488 Mantegna went to Rome, on the summons of Innocent VIII., and for two years he was there in residence, employed in decorating a chapel in the Vatican with frescoes of incidents in Our Saviour's Life: these frescoes were

unfortunately destroyed, on the subsequent demolition of the chapel by Paul VI. to enlarge the adjacent galleries. Whilst at Rome he painted for Francesco de' Medici the beautiful small group of the Madonna with the Infant Saviour asleep on her knee, now in the Uffizi.

On Mantegna's return to Mantua in 1490, he resumed his painting of the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, for the decoration of the new palace, then in progress of construction. Several drawings for the different groups of the composition are extant, two of them being in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. Available as movable hangings, the paintings do not seem to have been made for, or to have been fixed in, any appointed hall of the palace. Sigismund Cantelino, who, in 1501, was at the Court of Mantua on a mission from Duke Hercules of Ferrara, wrote on the 24th February to the Duke, giving him an account of the festivities, and of the performance of the *Adelphi* of Terence in the castle; and in his long description of the decorations of the theatre, he mentioned amongst them six pictures of the Triumph of Julius Cæsar by Mantegna.

In the war of succession which occurred in 1629, Mantua, after an obstinate siege, was taken by the army of the Emperor Ferdinand II. Several of the treasures of the palace, the series of the Triumph amongst them, had fortunately been disposed of some four years previously, and through the intervention of Daniel Nys, who was the private agent of the Court of Mantua, they were purchased for Charles I. and deposited in safety in England.¹ For three successive days the city was given up to pillage, accompanied by merciless barbarity. The Austrian general Aldringher took possession of the palace as his share of the plunder, and thoroughly stripped it of its contents, the

¹ See "Original Unpublished Papers illustrative of the Life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens," collected and edited by W. Noël Sainsbury; 8vo, London, 1859.

frescoes on the walls being nearly all wantonly destroyed by his soldiery.

The nine paintings of the series of the Triumph were not sold by the Commonwealth, and repurchased by Charles II. for £1,000, as generally has been stated. They were valued at £1,000 in September, 1651, and remained at Hampton Court, being reserved for "His Highness" Oliver Cromwell, and on the restoration they, fortunately, were found to be still in the palace. Through their various vicissitudes, owing to the perishable material of the fine-twilled linen they are painted on, they have suffered serious injury, lamentably increased by their having been almost entirely repainted, by the order of William III., on their being placed in the new gallery at Hampton Court Palace, which had been built for their reception. Whilst yet undisturbed in Mantua, the entire set of the nine compositions was, in 1598, engraved on wood in *chiaro oscuro* by Andrea Andreani, accompanied by a portrait on the frontispiece, not of Vincenzo Gonzaga, the then reigning Duke, as stated by Bartsch (xii., 102, 9), but of Mantegna, copied from the bronze bust of him in the church of S. Andrea. This bronze bust, said to be by Sperandio, with laurel wreath and diamonds for eyes, was set up to his memory in the chapel of S. Giovanni in the church of S. Andrea, where it is still preserved, without the eyes. The pedestal it stands upon is inscribed :—

"Esse parem nunc noris, si non præponis, Apelli,
Aereæ Mantiniæ qui simulacra vides."

About 1492, Mantegna painted, for the apartments of the Marchioness Isabella, the Allegory of Parnassus, now in the Louvre. An Assumption of the Madonna, where she is represented in an elliptical glory, with a group of Saints, and three boy-angels in the centre at the foot, in the collection of the Marquis Trivulzi, at Milan, was finished in 1497, as we learn from the inscription upon it, "A Man-

tinia p. an. gracie 1497 15 Augusti". To the same period are ascribed, the altar-piece of the enthroned Madonna with S. John and the Magdalene standing at the sides, and the monochrome, called the Triumph of Scipio, both in the National Gallery in London.

The last years of Mantegna's life were full of trouble and anxiety. His son Francesco, upon whom he was dependent for assistance in his work, had been banished from the city in disgrace. Overwhelmed with debts, Mantegna appealed to the Marchioness Isabella for help to enable him to settle a charge upon a house he had bought, and he was met by the request that he should let her have an antique head of Faustina, which for years had been his most treasured possession, and to which he had clung throughout his difficulties, with persistent refusal to part with it. The Marchioness obtained the bust he had set such store by: her servant Cassandra, by whom the negotiation had been conducted, wrote to her "that if he (Mantegna) were not to see it again for six days, I feel convinced he would die." Heedless of the letter, the bust was removed to the palace; before six weeks had passed away, the great painter succumbed to the illness he was suffering from;—he died on the 13th September, 1506, and was buried in his chapel of S. John the Baptist, in the church of S. Andrea. The head of Faustina must have remained unrecognized on the plunder of the city in 1630, as it is said to be still preserved in the Museum of Antiquities at Mantua.

Andrea Mantegna has left various personal records of the princes of Mantua, with whom, throughout his life, he was so intimately associated. During the years 1470-1474 he was employed in painting the frescoes on the walls of the Camera degli Sposi in the palace. Owing to their remote position in the vast pile of buildings, some few of the frescoes remained uninjured on the merciless destruction of the palace in 1630, and, although much damaged by time, the scenes yet preserved of the life of Lodovico Gonzaga, and

the members of his family, are of great interest. We learn from them the love of the Marquis for dogs, and the amusement he derived from having dwarfs about him ; their portraits are introduced amidst these domestic groups, and a wing in the palace was set apart for their residence. In the best preserved of the frescoes, the Marquis Lodovico is represented in profile, with a large shock-haired dog at his feet, receiving his son Francesco on his return from a visit he had paid to Rome, some of the buildings of the imperial city being seen in the background. The family was not celebrated for its personal beauty, and the clearly-defined portrayal of their features tells of the truthfulness wherewith they are given. An account of these frescoes, with outline engravings of them, was contributed to the "*Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*" for 1883, by Dr. Friedlaender.

An interesting series of drawings previously referred to (p. 95), attributed to Andrea Mantegna, is in England, belonging to the Countess of Rosebery ; the backgrounds of many of them are of the buildings and courtyards in the palace at Mantua ; a clever group of two young men, accompanied by two dwarfs, is evidently a sketch of members of the Gonzaga family. The drawings were engraved at Venice in 1795 by Francesco Novelli with imitative exactness, preserving the character of the originals.


In the Museo Patrio at Mantua there is a marble slab, bearing the Gonzaga arms, and wreaths of oak and olive leaves, supported by flying genii, surround bust portraits in profile, carved in relief, of the Marquis Lodovico and his wife, Barbara of Brandenburg, and of his son Federico, and his wife, Margherita of Bavaria ; the long pendant of the latter's peculiar headdress, in the fashion of the time, is inscribed *αμωμος* (immaculate) at the side. A slur had been cast upon her, in consequence of the young Marquis's flight from Mantua to escape from the engagement. The account of the "*Fedeli*" of Mantua, as narrated by Volta, in his

“Saggio Storico-critico sulla tipografia Mantovana del secolo xv. Venice, 1786,” of the discovery of the young Marquis and his six adherents in abject poverty in Naples, is as wild a story of mad adventure, in its truthfulness, as amongst the improbabilities of romance has ever been invented; and when the marriage was fulfilled with great splendour of ceremonial, on Federico having been brought back from his concealment, the Greek word was adopted for his wife’s device.

There is a rare print, ascribed to Mantegna, of a bust portrait of the Marquis Lodovico, and of his wife Barbara in a long horn-shaped headdress, identified by a shield of the arms of Gonzaga and Brandenburg quartering Nuremberg. The features bear but slight resemblance to those of the Marquis in the frescoes in the palace. An oil painting, ascribed to Mantegna, exactly in correspondence with the print, was in the Duke of Hamilton’s collection, and, at the sale in 1882, was purchased by M. H. Cernuschi, of Paris. The picture is described by Morelli in his “Notizia d’opere di Disegno” (p. 145), and is mentioned by Waagen in his “Art Treasures of Great Britain” (iii., 298): Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their “History of Painting in North Italy” (i., 388), express doubts as to its authenticity.

Considerable technical knowledge of Mantegna’s engravings is needed for their investigation, several of the plates having been printed from until they yielded but an outline, and the clever copies made by his contemporaries are, in many instances, extremely difficult to distinguish from the originals. The Entombment of Our Saviour (B. xiii., 229, 3), as seen in late impressions, conveys no idea that from the same plate was once produced one of the most delicately finished prints ever pencilled by the painter-engraver’s skill upon the copper, and the composition, as it is pronounced to be by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their “Life of Raphael” (i., 308), is “absolutely perfect in its combination.” It was borrowed from by Raphael, and the lamenting figure

of S. John is recognizable, in more than one instance, in Albert Dürer's copper-plate engravings and woodcuts. Beyond what we can gather from observation of the progressive changes in the style of their cutting, Mantegna's prints are all characterized by the same classical style of drawing his teacher had trained him in the practice of; the delicate finish of the Entombment has more affinity, than any other by his hand, with the manner of the early Florentine artists, and the minute working of the shadows indicates a date, not much subsequent to 1466, in which year Mantegna returned from his visit to Florence, with the knowledge fresh in his thoughts of the new medium for the exercise of his art he had made the acquisition of.

The print next in importance, in its grandeur of conception, is a representation of Our Saviour (B. 6) standing between S. Andrew and S. Longinus, the patron saints of Mantua: the original pen-and-ink drawing, washed in sepia, is in the Royal collection at Munich, bearing the inscription "PIO  IMMORTALI DEO". It is the design for the altarpiece, painted for the chapel dedicated to S. Longinus, in the church of S. Andrew at Mantua.

Extremely deceptive in their exactness, as are the copies by Zoan Andrea and Giovanni Antonio da Brescia of many of the Mantegna engravings, The Entombment (B. 3) was beyond the skill of any other than the master's hand to produce in the spirit of the original: a feeble copy of it is ascribed to Zoan Andrea. One of the rarest of the Mantegna prints is of the Holy Family (B. 9), corresponding in its composition with the centre portion of the triptych of the Adoration of the Magi in the Uffizi at Florence. From the brilliancy of the few impressions extant, it is implied that some accident must have happened to the plate; for the work is of the artist's best time, and its having remained unfinished at his death can scarcely have been the cause of the condition it was left in. No copy is known, its incomplete state having interfered with any contemplated reproduction. Of Man-

tegna's other prints, many of the imitations are so deceptive in their resemblance to the originals, that it requires a practised eye to detect them. The popularity of the fine composition of the Entombment created the occasion for a repetition of the subject, in the upright print (B. 2); a duplicate of this second composition of the Entombment, in close resemblance almost line for line, was likewise engraved, both being accepted as the work of Mantegna; the perceptible difference between them is, that the birds in the air, four in number in one plate, are three only in the other: the copies made from them are slightly smaller, and they are distinguishable by the finished end of the ledge of rock, at the foot on the right, which is broken in the originals.

Other scenes from Our Saviour's Passion, of His Scourging (B. 1), and the Taking down from the Cross (B. 4), are somewhat fuller in colour, and heavier in the lines they are engraved with, rendering them less difficult to imitate. The Descent into Limbus (B. 5) is of finer workmanship, more in accordance with the first plate of the Entombment. A rare print of S. Sebastian (B. 10) upholding in his right hand the arrows of his martyrdom, somewhat lengthy in the figure, is a fine expressive engraving, with the shrinking look of suffering in the handsome features.

The character of Squarcione's teaching, and the taste it was in response to at the time, finds expression in many of Mantegna's engravings after the remains of Greek and Roman art, and Mantegna's drawings for some of his plates are preserved in the Albertina at Vienna, and in the British Museum. His artistic treatment of the subject of Hercules and Antæus, after an ancient bas-relief, was repeated in his painting of it on the ceiling of the *camera degli sposi* in the Palace at Mantua. The unattractive subjects of crowds of naked fauns and satyrs, in attendance upon Bacchus and Silenus, were engraved in response to the appreciation of the truthfulness of their transcript of the friezes they were designed from, owing to the interest in the remains of antique

sculpture which was then so general. Their correctness, as accurate copies of the originals, has to be accepted, in compensation for the repulsiveness of the groups of figures, and of the scenes they are engaged in. Albert Dürer made use of them as models for study; and, amongst the drawings by his hand of these Mantegna prints, one dated 1494 is in the Albertina at Vienna. Of much higher merit are the representations of the contest of Tritons and Nereids (B. 17, 18). A portion of the old sculpture they are copied from, corresponding with the left side of the second print, was discovered by Mr. Palgrave in the arched roof of one of the buildings adjacent to the church of San Vitale at Ravenna, and is noticed in his "Essay on the First Century of Italian Engraving," published in London in 1855. In an Appendix by V^{te}. Delaborde to his "Gravure en Italie," he gives photographic reproductions from the frieze and the engraving, showing the refinement of Mantegna's drawing, in its comparison with the antique carving he made his design from.

There are prints of three of the divisions, the fifth, sixth, and seventh groups, of the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, evidently copied from early designs, more or less differing in their construction from those subsequently adopted in the painting. In the first, of Elephants bearing torches (B. 12), the children on the backs of the animals, meaningless in their movements, are, in the painting, represented in spirited action; and the leader of the bull for sacrifice, statuesque of form in the engraving, is turned into a lifelike youth, full of animated expression in the painting.¹ The changes in the sixth group, of soldiers carrying the spoils of war (B. 13), are less noticeable, immaterial alterations of the trophies they bear being the main points of variation. This sixth group was engraved in duplicate; the figures in the one

¹ A fine drawing of this portion of the Triumph is in the Ambrosian Library at Milan.

advance in the same direction as in the painting, the background behind the trophies, which are partly in outline, being unfinished ; in the other, engraved by a different hand in reverse of the painting, the parts unfinished in the first of the two prints are completed, and in the margin on the right, a pilaster floreated in design is introduced, with an Ionic instead of the Corinthian capital the war trophy pilaster in the painting is surmounted with.

The differences are far greater in the last of the three compositions, the seventh in the procession, called by Bartsch in his description of the print (B. 11), the Senate of Rome accompanying the Triumph. There are no Senators in the picture, but the seventh group consists of prisoners with fettered hands, women, old and young, and their children, being mingled in the throng, followed by a dwarf buffoon, grimacing, and deriding them ; the buildings, moreover, in the background are entirely changed. The representation, in the engraving, of the Senators, is in fact of much interest, in its being the only record of a drawing by Mantegna, intended for a further portion of the Triumph, which was not made use of : it was designed apparently for the end of the procession, to follow the car, but the proposed introduction of the group was abandoned. The four engravings, although closely in imitation of Mantegna's workmanship, have none of his bold free manner, being weak and feeble in their cutting, and are not by his hand. The probability is that Zoan Andrea engraved them at Mantua, from some preliminary studies he obtained possession of.

The information we derive from the foregoing account of the proceedings taken by Andrea Mantegna to put a stop to the piracy of his compositions, supports the opinion that many of the prints, catalogued by Bartsch and his successors as by Mantegna, should be transferred to Zoan Andrea, and other engravers. Zoan Andrea's proceedings evidently extended beyond the mere reproduction of the engravings ; by some means he must have become possessed

of original drawings, which he engraved in imitative exactness of the master's manner.

Very early impressions of two sheets of an Allegory, catalogued by Bartsch as by Zoan Andrea (B. xiii., 303, 16-17), are in the British Museum, accompanied by a drawing by Mantegna of the upper portion, and the prints have consequently been placed amongst his works. From the correspondence of this drawing, in manner, and apparently in point of time, with a drawing of the Calumny of Apelles, by Andrea Mantegna, also in the British Museum, of which Moceto made an engraving (B. xiii., 113, 10; P. v., 136, 11), there would seem to be some link of association between the two subjects. The upper portion of the print of the Allegory bears the inscription, "VIRTUS COMBUSTA", beneath some burning laurel branches, "VIRTUS DESERTA" being inscribed in the lower portion of the print, upon a scroll held by Daphne, changing into a laurel. Ottley, in his "Inquiry" (510), describes the corpulent woman who is seated on a globe to be Envy, and a companion by her side to be Ignorance watching her victims, who are represented as a blind woman, and a man with his head covered by a cloth, both of them being led by a dog, and inveigled to the brink of a deep pit by two demons, one of whom plays on a flute. In the lower portion the victims who have fallen down the pit are massed in the centre in a close-packed heap, with Mercury on the right engaged in extricating them, and Daphne sits on the left: the further inscription "VIRTVTI . S . A . I ." is on a stone at the bottom. The two engravings, carefully minute in their execution, cannot be regarded as by Mantegna's hand, so different are they from his known workmanship. An undiscovered treatise appears to have been written upon the subject of their composition, judging by a reduced copy of the entire print in the British Museum, with letters of reference against the different figures.

The rare representation of a chalice (P. v., 78, 26) mentioned by Ottley (511), is a careful reproduction upon the

copper, but not by Mantegna, of an elaborate drawing by him, which was in the collection of the Earl of Arundel at the time (1640) when Hollar the engraver was in his employ. The drawing has since been lost sight of; a record of it has been preserved in the inscription Hollar added at the foot of an engraving he made of it (Parthey, 2643).





CHAPTER XIII.

ZOAN ANDREA. LUCA FIORENTINO.

ALTOBELLO MELONE.

ZOAN ANDREA.



ZOAN ANDREA, painter of Mantua, was first mentioned by name in 1802 by the Abbé Zani in his "Materiali" (p. 109), where he describes a breviary, "Officia secundum morem sancte Romane ecclesie" printed by "Joanne Hertzog de Zandoja" in Venice, in 1497, "the principal woodcuts in it being marked with the initials *z . a .* denoting their designer to be Joannes Andrea, the same artificer who has engraved many prints with the burin, some copied from Mantegna and Albert Dürer, but the larger proportion of his own invention, a great part of them being distinguished by the letters "*z . a .*" or "*z . A .*", which in the Venetian dialect would read Zoan (Giovanni) Andrea." Zani's acquaintance with Zoan Andrea's name was derived most probably from his observation of the inscription of it, upon his print in the series of the Apocalypse of S. John, of the Woman clothed with the Sun, copied from the Albert Dürer woodcut (B. vii., 128, 71).

In the preceding memoir of Andrea Mantegna, an account is given of Zoan Andrea's occupation in his early days at Mantua, in making fac-similes of the great painter's

prints and drawings, and of the proceedings adopted to put a stop to the piracy. We have no further acquaintance with his personal history, and the slight additional knowledge brought together respecting him is gleaned only from his engravings. His copies of the prints of Mantegna, all of which are without date or signature, were published with the view to their sale as the originals, and were engraved with the same avoidance of any mark of identification : the close resemblance to Mantegna's manner, wherewith Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, as well as Zoan Andrea, executed the imitations they made, renders it difficult to distinguish the master's works from these deceptive copies of them.

Besides his copies from Mantegna, and from the prints of Albert Dürer, a considerable number of engravings are classified under Zoan Andrea's name, many of them marked with his initials, whilst others closely in correspondence with them, although bearing no signature, are evidently of his workmanship. The print of Judith and her attendant holding the head of Holofernes (B. xiii., 295, 1), with the *z. A.* initials upon it, is of great excellence, in the accurate care of its execution, in adherence to the spirit of the drawing, manifestly by Andrea Mantegna, it is copied from. In Zoan Andrea's highly-finished engraving of a fountain (B. 15) Mantegna's influence is again apparent in the statue of Neptune at its summit, and in the animated figures of the boys assembled upon the basins the fountain is formed in. An allegorical composition (B. 13) of three children, two of whom bear bucklers on their arms, whilst a third carries a dead eagle by the legs, is marked with the *z. A.* initials. His representation of seven boys (B. 14) endeavouring to lead two goats to drink of the water one of them pours from a ewer, is full of clever drawing ; the scene is bounded at the back by a picturesque landscape, borrowed from an early anonymous print (B. xiii., 85, 3).

In all Zoan Andrea's engravings issued during the latter

part of the fifteenth century, there is the obvious study of the works of Andrea Mantegna. It is noticeable in a group of six boys gathered on a projecting rim near the base of a large candelabrum, in one of a series of panels of ornament, thirty or more in number, all apparently from Zoan Andrea's own design, executed prior to his residence in Venice and his engagement there in supplying the printers with illustrations for their books. To the same early period belongs his careful copy, in reverse (B. 20), marked with his initials, of the rare Milanese print in the British Museum, ascribed to Leonardo da Vinci, of a large winged dragon attacking a lion; there are drawings of the composition in the Uffizi at Florence, and in the Museum at Frankfort.

Passavant describes a print of the Lovers, with the *z. A.* signature (v., 83, 43), as being delicately engraved. The impression in the British Museum, feeble and bad in drawing, bearing no mark, is probably a copy of the print. Signor Morelli, in his "Italian Masters in German Galleries" (p. 144), attributes the design of it to Jacobo de' Barbari.

From the Abbé Zani we have the first intimation of Zoan Andrea's residence in Venice, in his account of the breviary of 1497, which is confirmed by Zoan Andrea's contributions to a rare edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the Italian Vulgate, printed also in the city in the same year:—"Ovidio metamorphoseos vulgare—Stampato in Venetia per Zoāne rosso vercellese ad instantia del nobile homo miser Lucantonio zonta fiorentino del MCCCCLXXXVII. Adi x. del mēse de Aprile," with illustrations interspersed in the text, sixteen of them, distinguishable by the superiority of their drawing, being marked with the *z a* initials. Ottley, and the writers contemporary with him, who investigated the authorship of these illustrations, knew them only in later impressions, in two Latin editions of the *Metamorphoses*, one printed at Parma in 1505, and the other at Venice in 1509, and, consequently, they were in ignorance

of the fact of the same blocks or plates having been used for the earlier edition of 1497. By Ottley, in his "Inquiry" (p. 574), we have the first mention of them, as a set of sixteen prints, engraved for the Ovid, which he had met with in the possession of Mr. Douce, cut from a copy of the Venice edition of 1509. The discussion of the subject was continued by Passavant (vol. i., 136-8), who was acquainted with them from the impressions in the Parma edition of 1505.

Zoan Andrea had been apparently on terms of intimacy, and in residence, prior to 1497, either in Vicenza or Venice, with Benedetto Montagna, engaged with him in illustrating the stories of the Metamorphoses. Several copper-plates by Montagna (p. 232), described in the subsequent account of his works, agree in design with many of the vignettes in the Ovid, especially those with the subjects of the Rape of Europa, and of Mercury and Aglauros.

We find, from the frequent recurrence of the signature upon the illustrations of the books published at Venice, that early in the sixteenth century the engraver who made use of the **ia** initials was in full employment by the printers in the city, supplying them with illustrations for the ornamentation of the various church-service books there was at the time a great demand for. In a fine 4to "Missale Predicatorum," also issued from the Giunta press, "Arte et impensis Lucantonii de Giunta florentini diligentissime impressum MDCCCCVI. pridie nonis Februarii," copiously illustrated, the large and small subjects being all in the style of Andrea Mantegna, there is a small Crucifixion marked with the **ia** initials. In the autumn of the same year we find a breviary, "Breviarium monasticum—Venetiis per Bernardinum Stagninum de Monteferrato accuratissime impressum Anno a nativitate domini quingesimo sexto supra millesimum sexto kalendis novembris," wherein four of the fourteen illustrations are marked with the **ia** initials, the subjects of them being, David dancing before the Ark, the Conversion

of S. Paul, S. Paul before Festus, and a Group of five saints in a meadow, with a view of a city at the back—a mitred bishop with his crosier stands in the centre between two female saints, a monk with a book and a small cross being on the right, and a martyred saint on the left, holding a book and the palm-branch of his martyrdom; God the Father in a glory of cherubim is above the group, with His hands extended in blessing, a scroll being beneath them inscribed “Hi sūt in quorum mihi bene cumplacuit.”¹ In the following year an “Officium beate Marie secundum usum Romanum” was issued in small octavo by the same printer: “Impressum impensis nobilis viri Bernardini Stagnini de Monteferrato anno a salutifera incarnatione millesimo quingentesimo septimo, sexto kalendis Octobris,” which is one of the most profusely ornamented of the Italian Service-books of the time, each page being bordered, at the sides and the foot, with scenes of Sacred History, in the style of the French Books of Hours. Amongst the larger subjects, the block engraved for the breviary of 1506, with the representation of David dancing before the Ark, is made use of for the illustration of the seven penitential psalms, and preceding “Ad laudes” there is the scene of Joachim embracing S. Anna, engraved by Zoan Andrea, marked with the **ia** initials. Copies of these three last-named volumes are in the writer’s possession. Ottley (578) describes a breviary belonging to Mr. Douce. “Explicit offm̄ ordinariū Bte marie V̄gis Impressum Venetiis ip̄esis nobilis viri Bernardini stagnini de Monteferrato anno Salutis 1511 Die 15 Decembris” wherein he tells us one of the woodcuts, “of the Miraculous Conception of Elizabeth,” bears the **ia** initials, and by Passavant (i., 136-140) mention is made of several other contemporary books similarly illustrated.

¹ The block was subsequently used for a “Missale Romanum” printed at Venice by the same printer: “Impensisq; Bernardini stagnini montisferatis” in 1509. A copy from the print in the 1509 volume is given by Dr. Lippmann in his “Italienische Holzschnitt” (p. 73).

At the time of the publication of Ottley's "Inquiry," in 1816, nothing was then known of Zoan Andrea's residence during his early days at Mantua, or of the particulars of his employment there, in fabricating his well-known copies of Andrea Mantegna's engravings. Ottley questioned the correctness of the identification of the copper-plate engravings of Zoan Andrea, with the prints marked with the **ia** initials in the books issued at Venice: the subject was discussed at length by him in his "Inquiry" (p. 574), with the argument that, from the difference in form of the letters used for the signature upon the book illustrations and the copper-plate engravings, they were by different hands. At the end of a note, commencing on page 576, in which he describes in detail the sixteen prints in the Ovid with the **ia** mark upon them, Ottley gives the explanation of the doubts he entertained of the correctness of their ascription to Zoan Andrea, based as he tells us upon a discovery he believed he had made of the name of the engraver, in a small 8vo volume of an Italian "Biblia Pauperum" belonging to Mr. Douce, and he quotes the colophon at the end of the volume, which is that of the Venice printer, Giovanni Andrea Valvassore, "Opera di Giovaniandrea Vavassore¹ ditto Vadagnino: Stampata novamēte nella inclita citta di Vinegia," adding that "*the artist*, it is to be observed, here calls himself Giovanni, not Zoan Andrea."

The creation of *the artist* of the illustrations of the Italian "Biblia Pauperum," out of the baptismal names in the inscription used by the printer Valvassore in the colophon of his book, arises solely from Ottley's surmise, as no signature or mark is upon any of the illustrations in the volume; and the style of their heavy cutting is widely different from that of the bright clear lines of the numerous vignettes and book prints marked with the **ia** initials. Dr. Lippmann, in his

¹ The form of colophon more generally used by Valvassore is "Appresso Gio : Andr : Valvassore."

"Italienische Holzschnitt" (p. 66), states that the prints in the "Biblia Pauperum" have no claim to artistic merit, adding that Valvassore may have been the engraver, printer, and publisher of them combined.

During the period commencing in 1497, in which year the breviary described by Zani, and the Bonsignore Ovid by Lucantonio Giunta were published, the engraver, who made use of the **ia** signature, was actively employed by the Giuntas, Bernardinus, Stagninus de Monteferrato, and the leading printers of Venice, as we learn from the volumes issued from their presses, in furnishing them with illustrations marked with the **ia** initials. Zoan Andrea engraved a series of copies of the Albert Dürer Apocalypse, presently to be mentioned, and the volume they are contained in supplies the evidence, that the **3.A** initials therein used, in varied form, are those of his name, from the inscription of the name in full upon one of them. The volume of the Apocalypse was published by another Venice printer, Alessandro Paganinus, in 1516. The so-called "Biblia Pauperum," the earliest known book printed at the press of Giovanni Andrea Valvassore, was likewise issued, it is supposed, in the same year; there is no previous mention of Valvassore's name, no earlier book from his press being known.

A copy of the "Biblia Pauperum" is in the British Museum Library (c. 17, a. 11), "Opera nova contemplativa p ogni fidel christiano laquale tratta de la figure del testamento vecchio, la quale figure sonno verificato nel testamento nuovo," &c. The illustrations consist of scenes from the Old Testament, and from the New Testament in fulfilment of them, the only text, at the foot of the pages, being explanatory notices of the woodcuts, printed on both sides of the leaves. They are coarse in drawing and execution, totally different in character from any print bearing the **ia** initials. None of them have either mark or signature, nor is there any known volume printed by Valvassore

where the illustrations in its pages are either marked with the **ia** initials, or correspond in their style with the work of the engraver who made use of them.

The only signature employed by Valvassore, with which he occasionally marked his publications, is totally distinct from that of the two Gothic initials **ia**, and is of the three first letters of his name, in Roman characters, *z . a . v*.

In 1541 Valvassore, in partnership with his brother Florio, republished, in small 8vo, a series of love-letters, compiled by Giovanni Antonio Tagliente, originally printed by "F. Bindoni & M. Passini, Vinegia, 1533", "*Opera Amoroſa che inſegna a componer lettere—MDXXXI—Stampata in Venetia per giovanni andrea Vavassore detto guadagnino & Florio Fratello.*"¹ An ornamented border surrounds the title:—a man kneels on either ſide ſuſtaining on his head a baſket filled with fruit, which is ſurmounted by trophies of arms, and above them a winged child, blowing a trumpet, leans over the top of the arch in the centre, beneath which an old man reclines, holding with both hands two circular-headed tablets. In the ſpace at the foot two ſeated youths ſupport an eſcutcheon, whereon a heart, ſurmounted by a croſs, is drawn in outline, inſcribed in the centre with Valvassore's initials *z . a . v*. The reverse of the laſt leaf D IIII is occupied by Valvassore's device, on a dark ground, ſurrounded by a full border of foliage, finiſhed with dolphins at the ſides. A ſhield is ſuſpended in the centre, whereon the heart, with the *z . a . v*. initials, is at the right, and a three-towered caſtle is at the left. A copy of the book is in the writer's poſſeſſion.

One of ſeveral volumes, with engravings of patterns of lace, printed by Valvassore, is entitled:—"Opera nova

¹ Passavant (v., 88) mentions a ſet of the ſeven Planets, on three of which are the letters **FF** (Florio fecit), published, with ſome verſes in 1544, with the colophon "*Per Giovanni Andrea Vavassore detto Guadagnino et Florio fratello nell' anno del Signore MDXXXIIII.*"

Universal intitulata corona di racammi :—Novamente Stampata ne la inclita citta di Vineggia. per Giovanni andrea Vavassore detto guadagniō. Finisce il libro intitolato corona di racami.” In the arabesque ornament, on the right side of the first page, Valvassore’s initials, “G . A . V .” are inscribed. There is no date in the colophon : the book is considered to have been printed in 1548.

Valvassore continued printing at Venice for a period exceeding fifty years subsequent to 1516 ; he issued several editions of the poems of Ariosto, the last named by Brunet (i., 435) being a quarto, with wood engravings, of the year 1567 ; his death must have occurred prior to 1584, as we find mention of his “heirs” in the colophon of a book of Jean Ostans upon embroidery, “La vera perfettione del disegno Venetia MDLXXXIII presso gli heredi Valvassori.” The Marquis d’Adda, in his “Essai bibliographique sur les anciens modèles de lingerie” (“Gazette des Beaux Arts,” xv., 342, xvii., 421), gives a list of the various books published upon lace and tapestry work, several printed by Valvassore during the years 1530-67 being amongst them. And he tells us (xv., 344) that “Zoan Andrea Valvassore is no other than Zoan Andrea, pupil of Mantegna, who studied design and the art of engraving, towards the end of the fifteenth century, in Mantegna’s atelier, his works recalling the style as well as the manner of engraving of the author of the beautiful prints so coveted by amateurs ; and that he engraved on wood patterns of embroidery and tapestry.”

The Marquis, by thus identifying Zoan Andrea with Giovanni Andrea Valvassore, extends the period of his art employment, from the time of our first acquaintance with him in Mantua prior to 1478, until a date subsequent to 1567 ; he adduces no authority for his opinion, which is merely the adoption of what had antecedently been surmised by Ottley.

To his quotation of the colophon of the “Opera nova contemplativa” Ottley added the account of the printer’s

inscription upon a large map of Italy belonging to Mr. Lloyd, "*Italia opera di Joanne Andrea di Vavassori ditto Vadagnino*", considering it confirmatory of his opinion that it is the name of the engraver who used the **JA** initials. And the Marquis d'Adda, in his "*Essai bibliographique sur les anciens modèles de lingerie*," previously referred to, mentions a map of France, in four sheets, in the collection of M. Angiolini of Milan, inscribed, "*Hoc opus Johannes Andreas Vavassor dictus Vadagninus fecit 1536. Venetiis.*" Dr. Lippmann, in his "*Italienische Holzschnitt*," refers to other prints with similar inscriptions in the Berlin Print collection.

Passavant, like the writers who preceded him, had no knowledge of Zoan Andrea's connection with the city of Mantua, subsequently made known from the researches in its archives. At the end of Passavant's account of the master's works, he gives the particulars (P. i., 139; v., 87, 64) of five metal engravings, portions of a series of the Labours of Hercules, the last being a representation of the Death of Hercules in the burning robe saturated with the blood of the centaur Nessus, which are in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris, bearing the inscription on a tablet in the upper part, of "*Opera di Giovanni Andrea Valvassori detto Guadagnino*"; remarking upon them that "*Le dessin, dans le style venitien, est rude et mal compris; nous croyons, en consequence, qu'il est de Zoan Andrea lui-même, tandis que le gravure est d'une autre main.*" And he adds a notice of a series of copies, twelve in number, of these Labours of Hercules, with the colophon, "*Imprimé à Paris, par Deny Fontenoy Rue Montorgueil, à la Corne, près l'Echiquier*". Brulliot (ii., 1293) describes a set he had seen as ten in number, engraved on wood with diagonal hatching.¹

¹ In the British Museum there is a set of twelve prints of the Labours of Hercules, by an anonymous master (B. ix., 160), copies, it is presumed, of the prints to which the name of the printer Giovanni Andrea Valvassore is appended.

Passavant considered (P. i., 138) that the marks $\frac{3}{4}$. A., **1 a**, and **1 . A.**, which are found on the illustrations of the Venetian books of the first quarter of the sixteenth century, appertained to the artist designated by Zani as Zoan Andrea, who also signed his copper-plate engravings with the $\frac{3}{4}$. A. initials, and that many of his own designs, especially of arabesques, were partly engraved from metal plates: on comparing the impressions in the volume of the Ovid of 1497, with those printed in 1505 and 1509, none of the usual breakages, liable to have occurred with wood blocks, after the lapse of twelve years from the time of their cutting, are perceptible; the crisp sharp lines, seen in the first edition of 1497, are slightly thickened in the later impressions, confirming the opinion entertained respecting them, that metal was the medium they were engraved upon.

Kolloff contributed an article entitled "Zoan Andrea" to Meyer's "Kunstler Lexikon" (vol. i., 1872, p. 698), written prior to the discoveries made in the archives of Mantua, respecting Zoan Andrea, and the proceedings taken against him by Andrea Mantegna. The article is illustrated with fac-similes of all the known monograms and initials, considered to be those of the name Zoan Andrea, and the writer discusses the questions which have arisen respecting them, his argument being mainly directed to disprove the correctness of the identification of the copper-plate engraver with the engraver of the illustrations of the books published at Venice, with strongly expressed remarks about the inefficiency of Passavant's critical judgment, in stating that metal plates, instead of wood blocks, were used for their production.

Dr. Lippmann, in his "Italienische Holzschnitt" (pp. 63-85), advances the opinion, that the painter Zoan Andrea of Mantua, who copied the works of Andrea Mantegna and Albert Dürer, and is known to us as the engraver of the different prints marked, in varied form, with the initials $\frac{3}{4}$. A. of his name, is not entitled to the ascription made

to him of the illustrations marked with the same initials, varied in form, which we find,—first in the Ovid of 1497, and subsequently in the various Church Service and other books, published at Venice during the succeeding twenty years and more. He agrees with the surmise first advanced by Ottley, and interprets the letters **IA** to be the mark of the *bottega* of the printer Giovanni Andrea Vavassore detto Vadagnino, who he considers was occupied in providing the printers of Venice with vignettes for their books, and adopted the initial letters of his two Christian names, as a mark of identification of the illustrations he supplied.

Ottley (576) pronounced the cuts of the “Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,” printed at Venice in 1499, to be by the engraver of the sixteen illustrations in the Ovid of 1497, marked with the **IA** initials: he writes, “I feel authorized in asserting that the one and the other were designed as well as engraved by the same artists.” The illustrations of the Ovid were, as we have mentioned, known to Ottley only from the impressions in the edition of 1509: had he been aware that they were designed and engraved in 1497, two years prior, instead of ten years subsequent, to those of the Hypnerotomachia, it would materially have strengthened the judgment he formed of them.¹ The representations in the Ovid, of Mercury and Herse, the Flaying of Marsyas, the Birth of Adonis, the Coronation of Numa Pompilius, and several others, are exactly similar in their treatment with the engravings of the Hypnerotomachia.

¹ Ottley had not seen the page border at the commencement of the text of the Ovid of 1497, which was not again used in any subsequent edition of the Metamorphoses. Recent writers upon the Hypnerotomachia, equally in ignorance of the plate of this page border having originally been engraved for and printed from in the Ovid of 1497, became acquainted with it only in its subsequent use for the title pages of the editions of the Comedies of Terence and Plautus, published in after years at Venice, and considered it to be in correspondence with the illustrations of the Hypnerotomachia: the cuts, however, with the **IA** initials, in the text of the Ovid, have far greater claim to such a comparison.

Some connection clearly existed; if not by the same hand, the execution of the illustrations of the *Hypnerotomachia* is based upon a study of those of the *Ovid* which preceded it, and the mode of cutting, so closely in correspondence, became refined and improved upon in the later work, through the two years' experience intervening between the two publications, with the greater manipulative freedom of using the burin that had been acquired.

Dr. Lippmann writes of them in his "*Italienische Holzschnitt*" (p. 84) that "the woodcuts in the *Ovid* of 1497 are, in their drawing, and in the conception and movement of the figures, so thoroughly related to the illustrations of the '*Hypnerotomachia*', that we probably may be allowed to attribute them to the same inventor."

In the subsequent account of Jacobo de' Barbari, reference is made to the arguments adduced by Dr. Lippmann, to prove that he also was extensively engaged in the production of the illustrations of the *Hypnerotomachia*, and the other Venetian woodcuts contemporary with them.

The practice of making fac-simile copies of the popular engravings of the artists of the time accompanied Zoan Andrea to Venice. When Albert Dürer visited the city in 1506, he distributed, by sale and gift, a considerable number of his prints. Owing to the interest they created, and the avidity wherewith they were sought for, Zoan Andrea applied himself, as he had done with respect to the engravings of Andrea Mantegna at Mantua, in imitating the German artist's works. By no other Italian engraver, except Marcantonio, have we so many copies of them.

In 1516, Zoan Andrea executed his most extensive series of copies from the works of Albert Dürer, of the fifteen prints of the Apocalypse of S. John, and they were published in a small folio volume, "*Apochalypsis Ihesv Christi—Impressa per Alex. Pag. Anno a natiui. domini. M.D.xvi.*" They consist of sixteen leaves: the text, in Gothic type, copied from that of the Albert Dürer volume, is at

the back of the illustrations, commencing with the title, and continued to the fifteenth leaf, ending with the colophon above quoted: the sixteenth leaf, with the angel holding the key and the dragon enchained, is blank at the back, the same as in the Albert Dürer series. The copies, averaging $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches high by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, are executed for the most part in reverse, being one-third less in size than the Albert Dürer woodcuts, which are $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches high by 11 inches wide. The details of the scenes are lessened in their effect, many incidents being omitted, and they are weaker, both in drawing and expression, owing to the restricted space the Zoan Andrea prints are engraved in. Occasional variations also occur, noticeable amongst them being the figure of Death on the pale horse, which in the Zoan Andrea print is more animated in its action, and the weapon the rider bears is a three-pronged spear, instead of a scythe.

The Dürer frontispiece, of the Madonna with the Infant Saviour, is replaced by a representation on the title, $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches high by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, taken from S. Matthew (chap. viii., vv. 23-27), of a ship with expanded sail progressing through a stormy sea to the right. Our Saviour reclines asleep at the stern of the deck, surrounded by his Disciples, one of whom is in the act of awakening Him. The towers and walls of a city are seen in the distance. The initials, "Z. A.," are at the bottom near the left. Beneath the print is the inscription, "FLVCTVABIT SED NON DEMERGETVR." The different marks of "I. A.," "Z. A.," "Z. A. D.," and "ZOVA. ADREA.," used throughout the series, are of much interest, in their identification of the master, through the varied form of signature he made use of, the last, of the name in full, being the only known instance of its adoption. Passavant considered the sixteen prints were produced from metal plates, but they all have the appearance and character of wood engravings.

One of the most interesting of Zoan Andrea's book

illustrations, described by Passavant (P. v., 86, 62), is a Coronation of the Madonna, mentioned by Brulliot (2nd Part, 1293 and 2784^b), where the Madonna is seated on the clouds in a glory of angels, God the Father and the Saviour being on either side of her, holding the crown over her head. A knight in armour and his lady kneel with their hands upheld in prayer at the foot. Below the knight there is a scroll, inscribed "CHRISTOPHORVS," and by the side of the lady, on the right, another scroll is inscribed "APOLONIA." The 3. A. initials are on the throne God the Father is seated upon. The print is at the commencement of a German breviary, printed at Venice in 1518 by Gregorius de Gregoriis, at the expense of Christophorus de Frangepan, Prince of Zeug, and his wife Apolonia, Countess of Frangepan. "Gedruckt ūm Sălicklihē mit gütē fleissz vollēdet zu Venedig durch den erberē Meister Gregoriū de Gregoriis. Im Jar nach christi unsers herrē geburt dausēt v hūdert ūn XVIII iar am letste dag dess3 monat3 Octobris."

A portrait of Charles V. as Emperor (P. v., 83, 46) bears no monogram, but is generally regarded to be by Zoan Andrea. Passavant describes it from an impression in the town gallery at Bâle. On a tablet at the left is the inscription "CAROLVS ROMAORꝫ IMPERATOR HISPANIARꝫ REX EDE CIVIS ATO3 CATHOL". The date of the print cannot therefore be earlier than 1519, as Charles' succession to the Imperial throne did not take place until January in that year, on the death of his grandfather Maximilian.

Zoan Andrea continued to work at Venice into the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Amongst the evidences of his doing so, is a quarto edition of Boiardo's "Orlando Inamorato," "Libri tre de Orlando innamorato del Conte di Scandiano Mattheomaria Boiardo—Impresso ī Venetia p Nicolo de Aristotile di Ferrara detto Zoppino—Del anno M.D. XXVIII." ; it is illustrated with page-size representations of the scenes of the poem, marked respectively with the initials "IO. B. P." and "3. A.," showing that at the

date of the publication of the volume in 1528 Giovanni Baptista del Porto was employed at Venice, working in association with Zoan Andrea. Two spirited battle-pieces are signed *z. a.* They are worked out with full colour in the shadows, but no cross-hatching is introduced; and they bear all the characteristics of Zoan Andrea's method of engraving, of the early part of the century, as seen in the various Church-service books we have referred to.

A small 8vo Petrarch, in the writer's possession, by the same printer, "*Stampato in Vinegia per Nicolo d'Aristotile detto Zuppino MDXXX,*" contains illustrations of the Triumphs, the size of the page, marked with the initials *z. a.*, similar in their treatment to the illustrations in the Orlando Inamorato, and shaded in diagonal lines, with the influence of Mantegna apparent in their drawing.¹ They are evidently by the hand of a man advanced in years, and we may regard them as amongst the last-known specimens of Zoan Andrea's workmanship. His death most probably occurred in Venice in, or not long subsequent to 1530.

LUCA FIORENTINO.

"Luca Fiorentino fecit" was stated by Heineken in his "*Idée Générale d'une collection d'estampes*" (pp. 232, 233) to be the explanation of the letters *L. A. F.* which are found, in varied form of monogram, upon the prints of an anonymous Italian engraver (B. xiii., 388; P. v., 62). Four examples of the prints are in the British Museum collection. Heineken's reading of the monogram was adopted by Bartsch and Passavant, an amplification of the signature being made, by the latter writer, into that of the Venice

¹ In the Print Room of the British Museum there are five small prints extracted from a volume of the Triumphs of Petrarch, with an additional one of Petrarch crowned, all engraved in outline, and marked with the initials *I. A.*

printer Luca Antonio de Giunta. This opinion is founded merely upon the coincidence of the initials L . A . which are generally added at the sides of the well-known Giunta device of "a red lily on a white ground," being the same as the two first letters of the anonymous engraver's monograms. The sole explanation of his opinion supplied by Passavant is in the brief notice preceding his supplemental list of the engravings ascribed by him to the master, where he remarks : "We subsequently discovered numerous reasons in support of Heineken's attribution, with the result that our master, a native of Florence, engraved on copper, certainly, however, on metal, for the different editions he published at Venice from 1506 to 1521." The so-called attribution thus amplified by Passavant is simply founded on the suggestion made by Heineken that the letters L . A . F . may be read as "Luca Fiorentino fecit," with no allusion to the printer Luca Antonio de Giunta, and there is in fact no evidence corroborative of the ascription to him of the prints in question. The only additional argument advanced by Passavant in support of it is, that a "'Missale Predicatorum,' which bears on its title-page a Florentine lily between the initials L . A , has on the last leaf the inscription, in the words, frequently made use of in the Giunta colophon, 'Arte et impensis Luce Antonii de Giunta florentini—explicit. Anno salutis MDXII.'"

At the end of the additions made by Passavant to the engravings attributed by him to the master, he includes certain woodcuts in Church-service books, published by the Giuntas and other printers at Venice, with illustrations in their pages, the last book in his list being a *Breviarum Romanorum*, 8vo, Venice, 1521, containing, amongst other illustrations, one at the end of an Assemblage of Five Saints, surmounted by the figure of God the Father in a glory of cherubim, and the inscription "Hi sunt in quorum mihi bene cumplacuit." The print, apparently, is a late impression, with the form of the first letter blurred in the

printing, from the plate Zoan Andrea engraved, and marked with the **i a** initials, for the “*Breviarium Monasticum—Venetiis per Bernardinum Stagninum de Monteferrato*,” 1506, of which a description is given in the preceding account of Zoan Andrea (p. 203).

ALTOBELLO MELONE.

Altobello Melone is mentioned by Ottley (550) as a native of Cremona, where, during a succession of years, he was one of the artists employed by the Sforzas, in painting the pictures and frescoes the churches and public buildings of the city are adorned with. Cremona formed the dowry of Bianca Maria, the daughter of Filippo Maria Visconti, on her marriage with Francesco Sforza: they rebuilt the church of San Sigismondo, where, on the 25th October, 1441, their marriage was celebrated: in after years Giulio Campi introduced portraits of Francesco Sforza and his wife Bianca Maria in his large picture over the high altar, dated 1540, representing their presentation to the Madonna by SS. Sigismund and Chrysanthus. In the church of San Agostino, which was one of the recipients of their liberal expenditure, their portraits in fresco, by Bonifazio Bembo, are on the wall between two of the side chapels.

The principal works of Altobello Melone are his frescoes of the Life of Our Saviour in the cathedral; scenes of the Passion are on the sides of the choir, and on the right wall of the nave there are the Last Supper, and four subjects of the Passion, signed, “ALTOBELLVS DE MELONIBVS . F . MDXVII.” Other paintings by his hand are in the church of San Michele: the most important of his pictures is a Coronation of the Madonna, over the high altar of SS. Nazaro et Celso. Vasari, in his life of Garofalo, mentions Altobello as having painted four frescoes for the dome of the cathedral at Cremona, portion of a series of a Life of Our Saviour,

which had been entrusted to Boccaccio Boccaccino. In the National Gallery in London there is a picture by Altobello, not signed, of Our Saviour on the road to Emmaus, and Passavant mentions a Nativity in the Brera at Milan.

His two rare engravings, of groups of children, are described by Ottley (550), and a copy of the first, of four dancing children, which is signed on a small tablet "ALTOBELO . V . F .", is included in the series of fac-similes he published; the account in the Catalogue of the Early Italian Prints in the British Museum is taken from this copy, neither of the originals being in the collection. The second engraving, of four undraped winged children playing musical instruments, exactly the same in size, and evidently intended as a companion to the first-named print, has no mark upon it: a child on the left plays the bagpipes, the second a guitar, the third a violin, and the fourth, on the right, a pipe and tabor. The extremely rare impression of this second print, described in Wilson's catalogue (p. 41), was acquired by the late Dr. Griffiths of Oxford, at the sale of whose prints in 1883 it passed into the possession of a foreign collector. Passavant (P. v., 148, 3) added to his list the print of the Captive by Andrea Mantegna (Ottley, 493): the reason alleged by him for doing so being that Nagler, in his "Monogrammisten" (No. 1224, p. 525), mentions an impression, with the name of Altobello upon it, and that as in style and the handling of the burin the impress of the master's manner is apparent in the print, he (Passavant) had not hesitated to include it amongst his works; the print, however, as far as can be judged from the reproduction in Ottley's "Inquiry," in his account of the works of Mantegna, lends but slight support to the opinion. Another print of twelve children at play (P. v., 82, 40), ascribed by Passavant to Zoan Andrea, is regarded as closely resembling, in its drawing, the two groups of children: the letters D . MA . V . are inscribed on a tablet

suspended from a tree.¹ A reproduction, from an impression in the writer's collection, has been added to the early Italian Prints in the British Museum ; but the print is hard in its cutting, and has not the delicacy and gradation of drawing of the group of children, identified by Altobello's signature.

¹ Amongst the arabesques catalogued by Bartsch with the prints of Zoan Andrea, two of them (B. xiii., 307, 22, 27) bear the same inscription.





CHAPTER XIV.

GIROLAMO MOCETO. BENEDETO MONTAGNA.



ANDREA MANTEGNA'S altar-piece for the church of San Zeno, with its radiance of colour, and the originality and grandeur of the whole composition, must have aroused the keenest emulation amongst the artists at Verona. Other commissions were executed in the city, and throughout the years 1458-9 Mantegna was resident there, during long periods, completing the works he had undertaken. Besides the paintings at Verona, and the frescoes he had, from his early days, been employed upon in the church of the Eremitani at Padua, and those at a later period in the Vatican, Mantegna, from the time of his entry into the service of the Gonzagas in 1460, until his death in 1506, was almost exclusively occupied in carrying out the various works he executed in their patrimonial homes, and in the decoration of the palace at Mantua, where alone, with the exceptions we have mentioned, they could be studied.

The diffusion of Mantegna's principles of drawing was materially due to the knowledge obtained of them through his engravings. We learn, from the trade carried on by Zoan Andrea in their piracy, how widespread was their popularity amongst the artists, his contemporaries, at the commencement of the last quarter of the fifteenth century; for the appeal we have quoted of Zoan Andrea's assistant,

Simone de' Ardizoni, wherein, amongst other complaints, mention is made of the seizure of the plates of the engravings, is addressed to Lodovico Gonzaga, who died in 1478.

GIROLAMO MOCETO.

The most eminent of the Northern painters in immediate succession to Mantegna, is Girolamo Moceto, who is generally regarded as having been born in Verona about 1450. Mantegna's great picture had been placed, in all the freshness of its transparency, over the high altar it was painted for, and from the opportunities for its study Moceto in his youth had the advantage of, the bold free drawing and fulness of colour his pictures and his prints are distinguished by, were acquired.

For a period of a century and a quarter the Scaglieri governed Verona with princely munificence, and were unsparing in their expenditure for the preservation of its ancient buildings, and the adornment of its ecclesiastical edifices. In no city in North Italy are there finer examples of Gothic architecture, than in the churches of Verona, with their decorative and fanciful ornamentation. San Zeno is remarkable for the solemnity of its lofty columns, with the rich tracery of its windows, and the bronze doors, upon which are represented the history of creation and other scenes of Bible History; and the Duomo, Sta. Maria Matricolare, with the quaint devices of its magnificent porch, is extremely beautiful and impressive in its wide expanse, sustained by the long ranges of tall columns of red marble, in double rows, with their figured capitals and pointed arches.

Francesco, "Can Grande," who ruled the principality from 1304 to 1329, was eminent for his encouragement of learning and for his skill as a statesman; he is celebrated in the verse of Dante, who found a home in his palace, whither he had

fled for refuge, and Boccaccio wrote in highly laudatory terms of his accomplishments and his valour. The memorial of the power of the Scaglieri, which extended over the principal portion of what subsequently became the Venetian territory, and of the influence they exercised upon the taste and art of the country, is preserved in the beautiful tombs which still adorn Verona: they stand in a central part of the city, enclosed by iron trellis work of delicate tracery, close to the church of Santa Maria l'Antica, which had been the burial-place of the Scaglieri, prior to their becoming the rulers of the city.

The Court, for some time after Can Grande's death, in 1329, was sustained in its splendour by his successors; but in 1387 Antonio della Scala, the last representative of the family, succumbed to the repeated attacks of the Visconti. Gian Galeazzo Visconti took possession of the city, and held it, until he was suddenly carried off by the plague in September, 1402. In the confusion that ensued on his death, Verona was seized by Francesco Carrara, lord of Padua, who was speedily vanquished by the Venetians, and put to death in the dungeons of S. Mark. Besieged by the armies of the Republic, the city in 1409 surrendered, with the reservation of its municipal privileges, and from that year lapsed into the dominion of Venice.

A strong Venetian influence pervades Moceto's engravings, made apparent from the buildings of the city he introduced in his compositions. No particulars of Moceto's family have been preserved, and of his early training and the circumstances of his life there is no record, save the knowledge we gather, in the study of his prints and his pictures, that from his boyhood the works of Andrea Mantegna were the guide for his education. A problematical portrait of him, attributed to his own hand, is in the Galleria Estense at Modena. He is said to have worked under Cima da Conegliano; but his print of the Baptism of Our Saviour (B. xiii., 217, 2) recalls rather Giovanni Bel-

lini's influence, and supports its claim to be considered Moceto's adaptation of a subject, which was so frequently painted by the artists of the time : the group of the three celestial attendants holding the vestments, brings to remembrance the devotional feeling Botticelli's angels are inspired with. The dreaminess of feature, so characteristic of the great Florentine painter, prevails in many of Moceto's prints, adding an increased charm to the sublimity of his thoughtful creations. Corresponding in character, is the rare print of Our Saviour's Resurrection (P. v., 136, 9), signed "HIERONIMVS MOCETVS," of which there is an impression in the Albertina at Vienna. Another of these sacred subjects, bearing no mark upon it, described by Bartsch as the Madonna and Eight Saints (B. xiii., 218, 3), attributed, as he mentions, to Benedeto Montagna, is pronounced by Bartsch to be undoubtedly by Moceto.

The Northern prints in the tone of their drawing and the motive of their composition frequently evince an inspiration, traceable to the teaching of Botticelli's master Filippo Lippi. It is observable in the works of Moceto, becoming cold and subdued in those of the painters of Vicenza and Brescia. A noticeable example, which has much of the style of Giovanni Maria da Brescia's workmanship, is a design for an altar-piece (P. v., 108, 33), of an enthroned Madonna, with S. Michael and S. Helena, stern and expressionless in their treatment, standing at the sides in attendance. The print is classified amongst the anonymous Florentine prints in the British Museum collection. In the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris it is catalogued with the works of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia.

M. Galichon, in an essay in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" for June, 1859 (ii., 321), writes of Moceto, that he reproduced, with a success which has not been surpassed, the grand style of Andrea Mantegna, the elegance of his design, and the fulness and elevated taste of his draperies ; and that no one has better succeeded in rendering the

dignity, the religious calm, and the mystical serenity, of the grave personages of Giovanni Bellini.

Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their "History of Painting in North Italy," remark that "two dates give us the measure of the time during which Moceto laboured, that of 1490 on his print of the Calumny of Apelles, and of 1514 in the History of Nola, in which he engraved four plans and views of Nola." No date or inscription, however, is upon the print of the Calumny of Apelles. Lanzi states that in the Gallery Correr at Venice he had seen a picture by Moceto, dated 1484, and another in the church of San Nazaro e Celso at Verona, dated 1493. We have information of his residence in the Neapolitan territory, from the publication in 1514 of the small folio, "*De Nola Opusculum.—Incussum est hoc opus opera diligentiaq; Probi viri Ioannis Rubri Vercellani. Venetiis Anno Salutis MDXIII. Septembris vero die sub Leonardo Lauredano Duce Sapientissimo.*" Moceto engraved for the volume four plans of the city and its environs: the first is a bird's-eye view of the bay of Naples, bounded by Vesuvius, carried to the Apennine range beyond Nola, drawn with great clearness of detail, the signature, "Hie. Moce," being in the lower left corner. In the preface by the author, Ambrogio Leone, dedicated to Prince Henri Orsini, there is the following recognition of the painter's share in the work:—"The image and similitude of the country I have produced so closely, by the aid of the painter Hieronymus Moceto, that to the eyes of everyone in all lands it may be manifest."

The somewhat disparaging account by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle of Moceto's paintings does but scant justice to the impressive power as a draughtsman he was possessed of, which we see in his prints representing the enthroned Madonna. His most effective picture, previously mentioned, painted for the church of San Nazaro e Celso in his native city, is of the Madonna and Child, with SS. Biagio and Giuliana as attendant saints,

and bears the signature "Hiers Moceto faciebat," dated 1493.¹ A Madonna and Child on panel, signed "Hieronimo Moceto p", is in the gallery at Vicenza.

In the "Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments, par Seroux D'Agincourt" (pl. CLXII.), we have the outline of a composition representing Herod directing the murder of the Innocents: in the descriptive paragraph, "Hieronimus Mocetto" is given as the signature upon it. In M. Galichon's account of Moceto, he informs us that M. le V^{te}. de Janzé of Paris possesses two paintings on panel, with subjects of the Murder of the Innocents, which are probably the picture the last mentioned outline in D'Agincourt was taken from: and V^{te}. Delaborde, in his "Gravure en Italie" (pp. 121-125), states that two of the figures in V^{te}. de Janzé's paintings correspond with similar figures in the print of a Sacrifice (P. v., 135, 15), engraved by Moceto.

The authenticated prints of Moceto are remarkable amongst the works of the painter-engravers of North Italy for their high artistic excellence. The first, in Bartsch's list, of Judith and her Nubian attendant with the head of Holofernes (B. xiii., 216, 1), is evidently from a drawing by the hand of Mantegna. Moceto's originality of composition is seen in the Baptism of Our Saviour (B. 2), previously mentioned; it is further illustrated by two engravings of the enthroned Madonna, distinguished by the dignified simplicity they both are treated with. In the first (B. 4), the Madonna, sustaining in her arms the Infant Saviour, occupies a canopied throne, formed with cornucopiæ at the top, bordered by a trellised screen extending at the sides to either margin: the features of the Mother and Child are of the highest type of devotional dignity, in their peaceful

¹ Dr. Waagen, in his account of the pictures at Thirlestaine House, belonging to Lord Northwick, attributed to Moceto an Incredulity of S. Thomas, which came from the Solly collection, where it was ascribed to Perugino. It was sent to the Manchester Exhibition by Lord Northwick, in 1857, as a Raphael.

solemnity of expression. The second print, unknown to Bartsch (P. v., 136, 10), is of additional importance, from the variety of incident introduced in the composition: the Madonna with the Infant Saviour is seated on a throne, raised in the centre of a building of decorated construction; S. John the Baptist is on the right, and a saint reading from a book is on the opposite side; three angel children, playing musical instruments, are at the foot, reminding us of the infant choristers, who chant their hymn of praise on the steps of the throne in Mantegna's picture in San Zeno. The print has all the character of being from Moceto's own design. The rare unfinished impression in the British Museum, before other saints were added under the arches of the building at the back, was bought at the sale of Dr. Wellesley's prints in 1860.

The same thoughtfulness of manner prevails throughout all Moceto's productions. His print of S. John the Baptist (B. 5) derives its inspiration from the drawing by Mantegna it is engraved from: but the weird grandeur of the figure, so expressive of S. Mark's account (i., 3), "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," evidently emanated from Moceto's fervent study of the words of the Evangelist.

One of the most elaborate of his prints, in its illustration of the peculiar style of his drawing and method of engraving, is the representation of a large assemblage of people, upon two separate plates, of which an impression of the left-hand portion only is in the British Museum described, by the title given to it by Passavant, as a Sacrifice of a Hog. This portion of the print, unknown to Bartsch or the writers preceding him, is twice catalogued by Passavant, in the fifth volume of his "*Peintre-Graveur*," under different descriptions:—first, amongst the anonymous masters of the school of Mantegna, as the Marriage of Jason and Medea (P. 116, 82), and secondly, amongst the works of Moceto as a Sacrifice of a Hog (P. 138, 15). The

latter title is sustained by the second half of the composition (B. xiii., 220, 7), where there is an altar, with fire burning upon it, the hog's head being seen in the flames. The occasion for the ceremonial, with the groups of Roman priests and priestesses and soldiers, we have no explanation of: crowds of figures extend across the whole range of the scene: the portion on the left is described in the official catalogue of the British Museum: in that on the right (B. xiii., 220, 7) a priest stands at the back of the altar, looking forward, holding a square incense-box by both hands to the fire: on the left of the altar another sacrificing priest raises a small round vessel over the flames, and a third priest, on the right, faced to the front, carries a ewer before him. Three children, two of them with small processional rods, are in front of the altar. On the right, a young woman, bearing a round disc before her, advances towards the altar, accompanied by three warriors, one of whom in front of her carries a torch, a cornucopia being in the hands of the warrior who follows her: an attendant, upholding a vase, is at the back of the man with the torch, and a woman, accompanied by a child, is close to the warrior with the cornucopia. A range of Venetian buildings occupies the back. In the margin, below the corner of the altar, on the left, is the inscription "HIËRO . M."

Our description of this second portion of the composition is obtained from an impression of the print, in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth. It carries the identification of the authorship of the two prints, in the signature in the margin. The subject is apparently adapted from an antique bas-relief; and the range of palatial edifices, extending along the whole expanse at the back of the two prints, evidently drawn from the doge's palace and the adjacent buildings, apprise us that with Venice the artist was well acquainted, confirming the other evidences we derive from his prints, that much of his time was passed there.

Two engravings, very distinct in their character, with no mark upon them, are generally regarded to be by Moceto's hand :—A Nymph asleep (B. xiii., 114, 11; P. v., 137, 12), and the Calumny of Apelles (B. xiii., 113, 10; P. v., 136, 11). The association, notwithstanding the difference of subject of the two prints, arises from the second having been engraved on the back of the plate, which had previously been used for that of the Nymph asleep. The reclining figure of the sleeping nymph is carefully drawn, but, from the crudeness of the composition, and of the figures introduced in it, with the adjuncts of the scene and its indelicacy, the work was evidently a youthful production.

M. Galichon describes the subject to be that of Amy-mone, one of the fifty Danaides, changed into a brook; she is represented asleep in a wood sacred to Pan, indicated by the terminal statue of Priapus in the distance on the left; her elbow rests on an urn, whence gushes the spring of the fountain that was named after her; the decapitated head of her husband Enceladus, whom she killed on the night of her wedding, is in the water, the blood being seen mingling with the stream. The Satyr she wounded, whilst shooting at a stag, has pursued her, and raises the light drapery she is covered with, the irritated gods having abandoned her to punishment. But Neptune, mindful of what the daughters of Danaus had done for Argos, in supplying the city with water during a drought, stays the brutality of the Satyr: the Sea God, in the guise of a beardless young man, with a mantle over his shoulder, is seated on a stone at the right, holding his trident. Behind the Nymph, Apollo is represented restraining the advance of Marsyas, who is in the Satyr's company: Apollo offers a flute to Marsyas, and challenges him to the contest which was to end so fatally. Fish and ducks are seen sporting in the water, and a couple of toads on its bank hold a scroll, with an unintelligible legend inscribed

upon it, which M. Haderer interpreted to be, in Greek characters, “σε μὲν εἰς δὲμα ἀναστῆλλειν ἀστοχοὺς μαχέας,” and M. Jules Renouvier, in Latin, “Sæpe eadem anas te jam sat parit.” But from neither reading are we enabled to arrive at the meaning of the legend.

The print of the Calumny is a work of far more experienced execution; it is adapted from Lucian's description of a painting by Apelles. The scene in the engraving is represented in the open space, before the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Venice, with Verrocchio's statue of Bartolomeo Coleoni in front of the church. In the Print Room of the British Museum there is a drawing by Andrea Mantegna, without any background, of the figures only, their names being inscribed against them; accompanying it is a clever pen copy of the Mantegna drawing by Rembrandt, of the same size, with the names also written in the same places. Bartsch was unacquainted with the Mantegna drawing, and merely repeated the erroneous attribution, so frequently recurring in his account of the early Italian engravings, of the print to Baldini after Botticelli.

The plate, in the first state, for the popularity of the composition occasioned it to be more than once almost entirely re-worked, was engraved in slightly incised lines, in imitative resemblance, the features being somewhat smaller, and less demonstrative than in the usual manner of Moceto, with the view to retain the expression of the Mantegna drawing. The background, with the statue and church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, was added by Moceto in his engraving. In conjunction with Bartolomeo Vivarini, Moceto had provided the designs for the windows of the church; the signature “Hyeronymus Mocetus” is painted on the glass of one of the lower compartments, beneath a spirited group of four combatants engaged in battle.¹

¹ Signor Morelli, in “Italian Masters in German Galleries,” 1883, (p. 360), expresses the opinion that Moceto as an artist is thoroughly

BENEDETO MONTAGNA.

Benedeto, one of the sons of Bartolomeo Montagna, was born at Vicenza about 1470. His father came from the neighbourhood of Brescia, and acquired the distinguished position he held as a painter, through his adoption of the style of the Bellini, in whose studio at Venice, during the years of his youth, he was for some time employed: early in life he went to Vicenza, which had long been under the government of Venice: the city soon after Gian Galeazzo Visconti's death, in 1402, followed the example of Verona and Brescia, and passed from the power of the Milanese to that of the Republic.

The paintings of Bartolomeo Montagna, from the attractive beauty and simplicity of the models he selected for his Madonnas, with their long oval faces and drooping eyelids, were in great request in Vicenza. His talent brought him to the notice of the family of Trissino and the nobles of the district, who were liberal in their patronage of the artists assembled in the city: their revenues were supplemented by the silk cultivation they were engaged in, for which the province was the most celebrated amongst the Venetian states. The altar-pieces, and other votive pictures by Montagna and his contemporaries the churches were adorned with, are now, for the most part, collected in the Museo Civico. In the latter half of the sixteenth century, lavish expenditure was made by the wealthy citizens of Vicenza in the alteration and enlargement of its public edifices, by the aid of their fellow-townsmen, Palladio, whose cold cheerless style is ill in accord with the rich Gothic architecture of the city.

Venetian, and presumes that he was born either at Murano or Venice, and that in all probability Alvise Vivarini must have been his master: "the large glass window at SS. Giovanni e Paolo (whose inscription, added only at the beginning of this century, has misled all the writers on art) belongs entirely to Moceto."

Benedeto Montagna was educated in his father's studio, and continued working there until the latter's death in 1523, when he was appointed his heir, and inherited his art connection. In the public records of Vicenza he is described, under the date 1490-1, as "magister pictor," Bartolomeo's designation being "celeberrimus pictor." Benedeto's reputation as a painter rested materially on the estimation his father had been held in. His most celebrated picture is a large altar-piece of the Madonna and Child enthroned between SS. Peter, Paul, Francis, and Antony of Padua, dated 1528, now in the Brera at Milan. He executed an Adoration of the Magi for the church of La Madonna del Monte, a sanctuary then in high repute, on the brow of the Monte Berico, outside the walls of Vicenza. It is one of the great attractions of the neighbourhood, from its picturesque position, overlooking the city and the wide expanse of the plain, with the broad stream of the river meandering through it, bounded by the Alps in the distance. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their "History of Painting in North Italy" (i., 436), mention a picture by Benedeto, in the Modena Gallery, with some doubt of its authenticity, of a Madonna, with the Infant Saviour receiving a flower from S. John the Baptist, signed and dated "1548 . M . B".

In the national collections of Paris and of London examples of nearly all the rare prints of Benedeto Montagna are preserved. None of them are dated, but a slight clue to the period of their production is furnished by two copies he made, after Albert Dürer,—of S. Sebastian (B. vii., 55), and of the Large Horse (B. vii., 97), of the year 1505. Benedeto Montagna's figures are occasionally dwarfed in proportion, but we trace in them the study of the manner of Moceto, and the naïve simplicity in the faces of his Madonnas reminds us of the innocence of expression which is so attractive in Albert Dürer's compositions. The details of buildings and scenery he

introduced in his landscapes are in the style which prevailed at Venice, in the pictures of the Bellini, and of Giorgione.

Benedeto Montagna's name in full, or his initials, are found upon nearly all his prints, which carry with them strong internal evidence of their having been both designed and engraved by his hand: but neither in sentiment or expression do they support the attribution which has of late years been made, that the engraver of them likewise executed the illustrations of the "*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*."

In the account of Zoan Andrea, reference is given to his presumed acquaintance with Benedeto Montagna, and the intimacy between them, arising from the occupation they were mutually engaged in, of illustrating the stories of Ovid. Zoan Andrea's share in the work has been referred to in the preceding description of his vignettes for the *Bonsignore Ovid* of 1497 (p. 203). The result, as regards Benedeto Montagna, was the execution of several engraved plates, uniform in size, for a series of the subjects of the *Metamorphoses*, evidently prepared for publication with the text of a volume, which was not carried to completion: their upright form, adapted for such a purpose, explains the use intended to have been made of them. In several instances they are identical in composition with the vignettes of Zoan Andrea for the *Bonsignore Ovid*.

With the exception of these illustrations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and of some few other plates of a similar character, the subjects of the engravings of Benedeto Montagna are, for the most part, chosen from the Bible and Ecclesiastical History. The Sacrifice of Isaac (B. xiii., 333, 1) is a prominent example of his manner, the principal group being placed in strong relief against the sky, with neither landscape nor cloud in the distant space. Notwithstanding errors of perspective and harshness of outline, his bold spirited drawing of the figures is very effective, in the peculiarity of position adopted for their

arrangement. The same principle is acted upon in his Holy Family (B. xiii., 337, 8), placed on a raised plateau, amidst a range of elaborate buildings the view beyond is finished with : the Madonna and Child and the Infant S. John are grouped on a brow of land in the centre, and S. Joseph is seen approaching from the lower left margin, his head and shoulders only being visible. The delineation of S. Jerome (B. xiii., 340, 14), seated under an arch-shaped rock, is full of clever detail, differing, in the motive of its design, from the other engravings we have mentioned.

We gather some slight insight into Benedeto Montagna's history, from the compositions wherewith the artist's tutelary saint, S. Benedict, is associated. The prints are replete with interest, in the knowledge we glean from them of monastic occupations and pursuits at the time. In the first (B. xiii., 338, 10), where the saint stands under the roof of a lofty building, the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino is seen in the distance, and the leading apostles of his order are assembled at his side,—SS. Maurus and Placidus being on the right, and his sister S. Scholastica and S. Justina on the left. The introduction of S. Justina, one of the saints of Padua, indicates that the artist had there met with employment, corroborated by the before-mentioned altar-piece of the enthroned Madonna, in the Brera at Milan, in which S. Anthony, the patron saint of Padua, is introduced in the attendant group.

In the print of S. Benedict addressing a congregation of his brethren (B. xiii., 339, 11), we are made acquainted with the inner routine of existence, and the religious exercises, the days of the monks were passed in. The audience, listening to the preacher's eloquence, are full of individual character, evidently portraits of the members of an ecclesiastical establishment Montagna was on terms of intimacy with : the hot midday light beams down upon some of the happier members of the fraternity, employed in the garden, seen through an open arcade, in the enclosed

court beyond. The seated listeners are ranged in a double row opposite the preacher ;—the eager gaze of a few of those in front shows how earnest is their attention to his discourse, whilst others at the back, overcome by the length of the Saint's arguments, are in various stages of weariness, some of them having succumbed to the heat and fallen asleep.

One of the most perfect productions of the time, unsurpassed in the whole range of engraving as a specimen of ornamentation, is a large woodcut of an enthroned Madonna (P. i., 133 ; v., 159, 58), engraved on two blocks, the whole measuring 22 by 16 inches, bearing a tablet in the upper left corner, inscribed "BENEDICTVS PINXIT", a similar tablet on the right being inscribed "IACOBVS FECIT". The Madonna, with the Infant Saviour standing on her knee, is seated on a throne within an arched recess, the front of the upper step at her feet, and of the uprights of the arch, and of the columns at the sides, being covered with a rich arabesque decoration. Thirteen incidents of the Passion of Our Saviour are on the face of the throne,—six on the frieze above, and seven on its lower step. On the continuation of the frieze along the wall, on either side, children are represented, with the emblems of the Passion, and the figure of a child is at the top of each of the side columns, the one on the right holding the cross, and the other on the left the pillar of the scourging. On the string of the pediment over the arch is the inscription "AVE . REGINA . CELORVM . MATER . REGIS . ANGELORVM . SAL." By the side of the throne S. Sebastian stands on the right, and S. Roch on the left. The composition is thoroughly Italian in style, with all the characteristics of the Northern painters, the successors to Andrea Mantegna. The engraving is by Jacobus of Strasburg : our description is taken from the rare impressions of it in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris.

A curious print, purchased at the sale of the collection

of the late M. Galichon at Paris in 1875, was described in the sale catalogue as "S. Jerome et un autre Saint travaillant aux Evangiles"—engraved by Benedeto Montagna. The print was placed, on its acquisition for the British Museum, amongst the works of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia. A tall gaunt-looking man, draped in a tattered garment, bearing no resemblance to S. Jerome, stands on the left holding a book, a monk being at the right, asleep at the foot of a lofty rock, with a hermit's hut on its summit. There is no mark or monogram to guide us as to the authorship of the engraving, which is finished with great carefulness of drawing, very different, in the style of its execution, from that of either Benedeto Montagna or Giovanni Antonio da Brescia. The print will be found, by the title of a Monk and a Hermit, amongst the early anonymous Italian masters in the British Museum collection.





CHAPTER XV.

GIOVANNI MARIA AND GIOVANNI ANTONIO DA BRESCIA.
THE MASTER "NA . DAT." JACOBUS OF STRASBURG.
THE MASTER OF 1515. GIOVANNI BAPTISTA DEL
PORTO.



GIOVANNI MARIA and Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, according to the "Abecedario pittorico" of P. A. Orlando, were reputed to have been brothers or members of the same family, natives of the city of Brescia. Bartsch's account (B. xiii., 315) is taken from Zani's "Materiali" (133), and he gives a quotation, naming the authors from whom Zani derived his particulars.

GIOVANNI MARIA DA BRESCIA.

Giovanni Maria, as we ascertain from the inscriptions on his prints, was a friar of the order of the Carmelites in Brescia, and may have been the "Zuan de Brexa depentor" who, on the 20th April, 1515, petitioned the Doge of Venice, that the exclusive privilege during ten years, should be granted to him, for the publication of a History of Trajan he had made designs for, to be engraved on wood. The petition, extracted from the archives of the Seignior of Venice, is given in full in Gaye's "Carteggio" (ii., 136), and is copied by Passavant (v., 104), who identifies

it with Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, doubting, however, whether such identification is correct, from the absence of his second Christian name. The print of the Justice of Trajan, by Giovanni Maria, supports the probability that he, if either of the Brescian artists in question, was the petitioner.

Brescia had been joined to the dominions of the Republic, soon after the death, in 1402, of Gian Galeazzo Visconti. The armourer's trade formed the staple of its commerce, and the revenues of the city were materially enhanced by the lucrative manufacture of every kind of warlike accoutrement, its artificers being renowned for the skilled excellence of their workmanship. The wealth that accrued was liberally expended, in the encouragement of the artists who were attracted to the city, and in the adornment, with their pictures, of its public buildings. Notwithstanding the pillage and reckless destruction by the troops of Gaston de Foix in 1512, the churches and palaces of Brescia are still celebrated for the works of the Venetian painters they contain.

The bustle and turbulence of commercial life interfered with the establishment of schools of painting in the city: owing to its proximity to Milan, and its consequent liability to invasion on every fresh outbreak of hostilities between the rival governments of Milan and Venice, there was slight opportunity for the quietude of study, save such tranquillity as could be obtained in the seclusion of the cloisters of its religious houses.

Giovanni Maria da Brescia has left us a record of the events from which his order derived its origin, in an engraving, copied from an altar-piece by his hand, for the chapel of the establishment he was a brother of. Giulio Antonio Averoldo, in "*Le Scelte pitture di Brescia*," 4to, Brescia, 1700, gives the particulars, with laudatory commendation, of the frescoes painted by Giovanni Maria da Brescia in the cloisters of the Carmelite monastery in

the city, consisting of Histories of Elijah and Elisha. Lanzi, in his notice of the Genoese School in his "History of Painting," refers to this account by Averoldo. Further information respecting Giovanni Maria da Brescia is supplied by Federigo Nicolo Christiani in his history, "*Della vita e della pitture di Lattanzio Gambara, Memorie storiche di aggiuntovi brevi notizie intorno a più celebri ed eccellenti Pittori Bresciani*," 8vo, Brescia, 1807, to which Passavant (P. v., 112) refers in his notice of the master. The frescoes have long since perished, as no mention by modern writers is made of their existence amongst the paintings in the city. Our knowledge of their author is derived from the few engravings he executed, and from them we learn the influence Andrea Mantegna exercised upon him. They preserve a record of an artist of repute in his day, whose pictures have passed into oblivion.

A monastery of his order was built on Mount Carmel, on the spot where Elijah was supposed to have offered his sacrifices. Giovanni Maria da Brescia's print of the Five Saints, with the Madonna in glory above (P. v., 113, 3), is after the altar-piece he painted for the chapel of his monastery. The different incidents attending the translation of Elijah, and the reception of his mantle by Elisha, are represented in the distant landscape at the sides, Mount Carmel, with the monastery on its summit, being introduced on the right. The inspiration of Mantegna is seen, not only in the Madonna and Child in the centre, copied from Mantegna's print (B. xiii., 232, 8), but in the expression of the group of Saints assembled at the foot. The print nearly shared the fate of the altar-piece it is the transcript of, the only known impression being in the British Museum. Although much injured and drawn upon, it fully preserves the composition, and bears a dedication (in Latin) at the foot: "To the Great God and the blessed Theotocus and other Saints, and to his very dear friend Helias Capreolus, by Joannes Maria, a Carmelite friar of Brescia, 1512."

A second print, similar in character, is in the collection of the Queen of Saxony at Dresden, where the Madonna (P. v., 113, 2) is seated on a canopied throne of rich architecture, with saints standing on either side. Passavant describes the print and its inscriptions: the one on a tablet at the top, "OPVS . FR̄IS . IO . MARIAE . BRIXIENSIS . OR . CARMELITARVM," gives us the account of its authorship.

A third print, of the story of the Justice of Trajan (B. xiii., 312, 1; P. v., 113, 1), bearing a similar inscription, "OPVS FR̄IS IO MARIAE BRIXIENSIS ORD CARMELITARVM MCCCCCII", was the only one of the master's works known to Bartsch and Ottley. The latter writer (p. 558) refers to the mention by Heineken of a print of "The Madonna with the Infant Christ in the clouds in a circle, inscribed, DEO MAX . BEATISS . THEOLOGO . ALIISQ . CAELICOLIS A IELIAE CAPREOLO AMICO CARISS . FR . IO . MA . BRIX . CARMELITA . DICAVIT . M . D . II," which, from the particulars previously given, we see is the print of the altar-piece we have first described. Ottley notices another "piece," adopting Strutt's words, of "A large upright plate, representing the Virgin seated upon the clouds, with S. John Baptist, S. Jerome, and three ecclesiastics of the order of the Carmelites, at the bottom, dated also 1502," which, apparently, is the print referred to as being in the collection of the Queen of Saxony.

In the print of the Justice of Trajan, the Emperor on horseback, surrounded by his officers, proceeds to the right, where the widow sustains the dead child on her bended knee, and the Emperor's son stands in the centre in front. Massive buildings occupy the background, the inscription, "INCORRVPTÆ IVSTICIÆ SEMPITERNVM EXEMP", being on the face of an arch on the left. The story told of Pope Gregory that, on beholding the inscription, he knelt down and offered up a prayer for the delivery of the Emperor's soul from Purgatory, is represented by the figure of the Pope, in an upper balcony on the right, leaning forward

with clasped hands in an attitude of prayer. Impressions of the print, in two states, are in the British Museum. The first has suffered much injury; the second, with some added work, is clear and distinct in its printing. The signature corresponds with that upon the print of the Madonna at Dresden, "OPVS FR̄IS IO MARIAE BRIXIENSIS ORD . CARMELITARVM," with the addition of the date, "MCCCCII."

The subject was a popular one in Brescia. Mrs. Jameson, in her "Sacred and Legendary Art" (i., 309), states that in the Town Hall there is a series of eight pictures of righteous judgments by Giulio Campi, that of the Emperor Trajan being one of them. Strutt, in his notice of Giovanni Maria (146), gives particulars of a print of "A Miracle of S. Gregory, where a boy is restored to life," and Passavant, adopting Strutt's description, adds the print as a fourth in his list, by the title of "La messe de St. Gregoire" (v., 114, 4). The print thus designated is evidently that of the Justice of Trajan. The introduction of the Pope, with the inscription, "DIVVS GREGORIS," by the side of the balcony he leans from, and the figures, on the ground beneath him, of the widow and the dead child on her knee, occasioned Strutt's account of the composition.

A rare print previously mentioned (p. 223) of the Madonna Enthroned with SS. Helena and Michael the Archangel at the sides (P. v., 108, 33) is classified in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris amongst the works of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia. There is no signature or date, but it has much of the character of Giovanni Maria's workmanship, as will be observed on comparison with the clear drawing of the faces of the Emperor and his son and other parts of the Justice of Trajan: the impression in the British Museum has been placed amongst the anonymous Florentine masters.

GIOVANNI ANTONIO DA BRESCIA.

Giovanni Antonio da Brescia was not, as he has been described, a member of any religious fraternity : we gather this from the character of the subjects he delineated, and there is no addition to his signature, entitling him to such a designation. A critical estimate of his engravings is extremely difficult to arrive at, so varied are they in design, and the method of their cutting. The system of making fac-similes of the prints of Andrea Mantegna, commenced by Zoan Andrea, was pursued with the same unscrupulousness at Brescia, which was free from the risk encountered at Mantua, of Andrea Mantegna's personal interference to prevent it.

The prints of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, with some material exceptions, consist to a considerable extent of reproductions from the works of his contemporaries : his claim, however, to rank as an artist of great original talent, is supported by the majestic figure of Justice (B. xiii., 327, 18), of his own composition, signed “. IO . AN . B̄X̄.” The most successful of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's engravings, resembling in the style of its treatment the figure of Justice, is the Holy Family (B. 5), from a design by Mantegna, which is classed as one of the finest examples of the early Italian School ; the Madonna is seated holding the Infant Saviour standing on her knee, to whom S. John, as a child, conducted by S. Elizabeth, presents a flower : S. Joseph, leaning on his staff, is at the back of the group ; the print is of the highest merit, in its carefulness of finish, and in the correctness of its reproduction of the fine drawing it is engraved from. Another large print, of the Scourging of Our Saviour (P. v., 107, 29), signed “ IO . ANTON . BRIXIAN . ” “ 1509 . F ”, is apparently of his own composition, influenced in its drawing, like the rest of his engravings, by his study of the works of Mantegna.

Amongst the important works executed by him are some

of the Labours of Hercules, to which he affixed his signature, the fight with the Nemæan lion (B. 11) being conspicuous for its animated treatment, and the vivid expression of the giant's grasp of the jaws of the animal prostrate between his feet: there is the same power of delineation of muscular action in his copy of the group of the Laocoon (B. 15).

Passavant (v., 103) designates the style of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia as having been formed after Andrea Mantegna, but modified subsequently from a study of Albert Dürer,—and states that on his going to Rome, he there became connected with the school of Marcantonio, and copied some of the engravings of the master after Raphael and his pupils, his method of engraving eventually becoming completely changed. We have the evidence that he was employed at Rome in his carefully executed engraving of a statue (P. v., 109, 42) inscribed “ROME NOVITER REPERTVM” “IO . AN . BRIXIA?” No such change, however, as Passavant indicates, is recognizable, except in so far as the opinion is sustained by the exactness of the copies made by him from the compositions of other artists. His original works, verified by his signature, and some few others, although unsigned, unquestionably by his hand, are of great artistic excellence, both in design and execution, with their imitation of the manner of Mantegna: no painting by him is known, and his occupation apparently was restricted to the production of his prints and their publication.

The practice by the painter-engravers of North Italy, of certifying the authorship of their engravings by the apposition of their signatures, had come very generally into use, and we see by the inscription of the names in full of Girolamo Moceto, Benedeto Montagna, Nicoletto da Modena, and Domenico Campagnola upon their prints, that it was regarded as a needed precaution for securing to themselves the title to their work. The addition of Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's initials to certain of the prints that are marked with them, is in several instances difficult of explanation:

we find them upon many of his productions, recognizable as designs of Andrea Mantegna; they are upon three, out of the four copies he made from Albert Dürer, the "A . D ." monogram being only upon the fourth of them : the plate, with the figure of a woman watering a plant (B. 21), which is not a copy, but an adaptation, varied in its detail, of the design of the same subject engraved by Marcantonio (B. xiv., 383), was printed from in the first instance, before Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's mark was added; and a Madonna and Child (B. xiii., 337, 7), catalogued by Bartsch amongst the works of Benedeto Montagna, was subsequently reworked, and Giovanni Antonio da Brescia's name was added to the plate. It has been surmised that he practised as a medallist, from the letters "F . A . B .", which are upon a medal of Nicolo Michele, a patrician of Venice, being interpreted to mean Fra Antonio da Brescia; but the initials do not sustain the reading given to them, and there is no other authority for the opinion.

THE MASTER "NA . DAT."

Very distinctive in character from the works of any of the Northern artists we have last enumerated, are three small prints by an unknown master, who marked them with the inscription "NA . DAT ." and the device of a rat-trap, with a rat at its side. The only clue to the city he was resident in, is from his print of two armies arranged in opposite ranks, previous to a battle (B. xiii., 365, 2), which is the work of a very clever draughtsman, who evidently had been an eye-witness of the scene. Bartsch was of opinion that the composition related to the battle of Fornuovo, in the Duchy of Parma, fought in 1495, when Charles VIII. gained a victory over the combined armies of the Pope, the Kings of Spain and Naples, and the Duke of Urbino. On the back of an impression of the print in the Imperial collection at Vienna, "Rota di Ravenna 1512"

is written; and to the battle, therefore, in which Gaston de Foix, the young nephew of Louis XII., lost his life, Passavant assigned the subject of the print: the battle was fought in the neighbourhood of Ravenna on Easter Sunday, 1512, Gaston de Foix being killed at the end of it, after having gained the victory at the cost of 20,000 men left dead on the field. The two armies, of the allied Italian troops with the Spaniards, and of the French, are drawn up in opposite line: the standard of France is upraised in the ranks of the army on the left, and that of Spain on the right.

Another print (B. xiii., 364, 1) is a design for an altarpiece—where the Madonna supporting the Infant Saviour on her knees, attended by S. Anna, is seated enthroned in the centre of a marbled courtyard. Open arches are on either side, through which are seen representations—on the left, of S. Joachim on his knees amidst his flocks, receiving the summons, inscribed (in Latin) on a scroll, borne by an angel in the air: "Return to your own people, Joachim, for the Lord has heard your prayer"; and, on the right, of S. Joseph seated in a landscape, the angel being in the air bearing a scroll similarly inscribed (in Latin): "Thou son of David, fear not to accept Mary as thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit" (Matt. i., 20). The composition is peculiar in its treatment, no painting with these added scenes at the sides being known.

A third print (P. v., 174, 3) has of late years been recognized—the only known impression being in the British Museum—of another of the painful monstrosities which excited so much interest at the time, as we learn from the representations of them the Italian and German engravers have left us; the subject is of a male and female child joined, in reverse directions, at their backs, with an inscription (in Latin) on a suspended tablet, informing us "they were born in Trebizond, and given as a present to the Sultan, who had them carefully educated."

Each of the three prints is inscribed with the letters "NA . DAT .", accompanied by the device of a rat-trap, and upon the last of them and upon that of the Enthroned Madonna, there is the addition of the letters "I . N .", the initials, most probably, of the unknown engraver's name. The opinion that he lived at Ravenna is dependent upon the interpretation put upon the MS. note on the back of the impression of the print of the two armies at Vienna, as the arms on the standards of the troops would connect the print, either with the Ravenna battle of 1512, or with the previous battle named by Bartsch. Passavant (v., 174), from the style of the buildings on the shore of the sea in the landscape, considered the engraver lived at Venice, and a copy of the print, made in his early days by Agostino Veneziano, whose youth was passed at Venice, is in some slight degree confirmatory of the opinion.

JACOBUS OF STRASBURG.

Amongst the engravers of North Italy, known by their adoption of the manner of Andrea Mantegna, there is an artist of much skilfulness of drawing, noticeable for his close adherence to the classical strictness of style instituted in the school of Squarcione. Our only knowledge respecting him is derived from the inscription upon the first of a series of twelve leaves, designed as a triumphal procession of Julius Cæsar: "Manibus propriis hoc preclarum opus in lucem prodire fecit Jacobus Argentoratensis germanus, architypus solertissimus. Anno Virginei partus M.D.III. Idibus februarii sub hemisphæro Veneto finem imposuit." From this inscription we gather that Jacobus, the engraver of the prints, was a native of Strasburg, who had migrated to Italy: his art education must have been acquired during a residence at Mantua, judging from the close imitation in the twelve prints we have named, of Mantegna's pictures of the same subject in the palace of the Gonzagas. The study of them

could alone have been made at Mantua, no copies, with the exception of prints of three portions of the procession, being at the time accessible: the woodcut copies of the entire series by Andrea Andreani had not then been executed.

By far the most important of the prints of Jacobus is an extremely rare one of the Enthroned Madonna, of which, apparently, the only known impression is in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris. It is engraved on wood, on two blocks, from a picture by Benedeto Montagna (P. i., 133; v., 159, 58), in the preceding account of whose works (p. 234) a brief description of it is given: in its clever imagery of incidents of the Madonna's life and of Our Saviour's Passion, it is one of the most beautiful examples of decorative design that has come down to us.

The last in Passavant's list of the artist's works (P. i., 133, 3), signed "OPVS IACOBI", is an oblong print, inscribed "ISTORIA ROMANA" near the margin in the top corner on the right. The statuesque figures brought together in the scene are clever individual studies, in the style of Mantegna's drawing from the antique, with but slight connected motive in their grouping as actors in the allegory they are engaged in the representation of. An impression of the print is in the British Museum. The subject is copied from the relief on the front of an ancient stone sarcophagus, in the north corridor of the Campo Santo at Pisa, which represents the departure of Hippolytus for the chase, after his rejection by Phaedra. The Pisans in the eleventh century brought the sarcophagus from Greece, when general admiration was aroused by the high excellence of its workmanship, and it is said to have exercised material influence upon the early studies of Nicolo Pisano. On the death, in 1072, of the Countess Beatrice—mother of the celebrated Countess Matilda of Tuscany—the sarcophagus was used for her tomb, and for centuries stood at the north door of the cathedral, until removed to

its present position. In Dr. Lippmann's "*Italienische Holzschnitt*" (69), a full account of the sculpture of the sarcophagus, and of the engraving, is given.

Dr. Lippmann (pp. 68-74) classifies Jacobus of Strasburg amongst the woodcutters of Venice, and expresses the opinion that he was employed, in association with Jacobo de' Barbari, in supplying the printers with illustrations for their publications. Dr. Lippmann further suggests that the ascription should be made to him of certain of the prints marked with the **ia** initials, denoting, as Dr. Lippmann considers, from their being the two first letters of his Christian name, the signature Jacobus of Strasburg made use of.

There are but three portions, in late states, in the British Museum collection, of the artist's *Triumph of Julius Cæsar*; from them we learn Passavant's statement, that they were engraved on metal, is erroneous, the marks of worm-holes being perceptible in the three impressions, proving that wood was used for their production.

By Zoan Andrea, Jacobo de' Barbari, Giovanni Baptista del Porto, and probably Domenico Campagnola, who all were metal-plate engravers, we find the occasional use of wood as a medium to work upon. These prints of Jacobus of Strasburg are the only instances of the exclusive employment of wood blocks, by an artist of the time in Italy, for the production of his compositions.

THE MASTER OF "1515."

A series of prints, bearing no letter or mark by which they can be identified, was first classified by Bartsch as by "*The Master of 1515*," owing to that date having been added to one of them. They are executed with a dry point needle upon soft metal, in a manner similar to that practised by the early painter-engravers; a large proportion are attributable to a date, somewhat prior to the year they are named from.

The artist who imagined their composition evidently engraved them, confirmed by their sketch-like character, and the careless and eccentric manner of their cutting. Scarcely a specimen amongst them can be regarded as a finished composition, or that rises beyond a thought hastily committed to the copper, for use in some work to be subsequently carried to completion.

In addition to the uncertainty as to the period and place they belong to, the prints have no resemblance to other engravings contemporary with them; their marked characteristic is a close imitation of Andrea Mantegna's style of drawing, and subjects from the heathen mythology are the favourite theme of the artist's pencil. The print bearing the date "1515," from which they have been named, is of Cleopatra seated by the side of a statue of Priapus, with the asp coiled round her left arm (B. xiii., 415, 12), inscribed "CLEOPATRA". The first print in Bartsch's list, with the title "*Hercule tuant le centaure Nessus*" (B. i.), does not correspond with the designation, although the intention, probably, was to represent the combat of Hercules and Nessus. Hercules stands between the legs of a horse fallen, with its rider, to the ground, the horse's head being at the right; the giant's upraised foot is against the head of the rider, whom he pulls backward by the hair, his club being held aloft in the right hand, in the act of striking.

Several of the prints are of trophies of arms, and sketches of columns and buildings, showing that the engraver had been trained in the study of architecture, and that Rome was the place they principally were worked in, from the introduction in the background of the prints of known edifices in the city. Important from its size, and the variety of its subject, is an equestrian statue (B. 18), in the midst of temples and structures at Rome; in the right lower corner, an undraped woman wearing a crown on her head, and holding a cornucopia, reclines with her left arm on a crouching lion; this portion of the print is unfinished, being only in outline.

The artist's ability of drawing from the nude is illustrated in a print, added by Passavant to Bartsch's list, of a second representation of Cleopatra (P. v., 90, 37) reclining on the ground, with the asp coiled round her arm : a fine impression of this rare print, no other of it apparently being known, is in the British Museum. The most significant example of the master's talent as a draughtsman, and the largest of his engravings, is a Battle piece (B. 17). The action of the whole scene is extremely spirited ; four horsemen charge to the right against some combatants on foot, one of whom holds an upraised shield, and another, stepping upon the slain body of an enemy, and guarding his head with his buckler, advances with a massive sabre against two of the horsemen.

GIOVANNI BAPTISTA DEL PORTO.

The engraver, who marked his prints with the letters "I.B." and the device of a bird, was described by Zani, in his "*Materiali*," by the name he has since been known by, of Giovanni Baptista del Porto, a copper-plate engraver of Modena, with the intimation that in the third volume of his larger work he would supply the explanatory evidences relating to him. The larger work, however, never was published, so that we are unacquainted with the evidence Zani's opinion was founded upon. Vedriani, in his "*Raccolta de' Pittori Scultori e Architetti Modanesi*" (p. 45), speaks of the fame of Giovanni Baptista del Porto as an engraver, and refers to the Chronicle of Tommasino Lancilotto for particulars of his works. Dr. Lippmann, in his "*Italienische Holzschnitt*" (104), states he had examined the chronicle, but that he found in it very slight information, there being the mention of three members of the Porto family, but no account of Giovanni. Dr. Lippmann (pp. 104-7) discusses the master's works seriatim, which he states are, in his estimation, more German than Italian in their

character, and that, from the great variety in their style, he regards them, not as the work of one artist, but that they emanated from a *bottega* in Modena, from which the printers were furnished with vignettes and woodcuts for their books. The monogram of the "I. B." with the bird Dr. Lippmann considers was affixed as the trade mark upon the prints supplied by the different engravers, amongst whom Giovanni Baptista del Porto was one of the principal contributors.

M. Galichon published in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" for December, 1859 (iv., 257), an essay upon the artist, with an account of such slight information as had been collected respecting him, accompanied by a catalogue of his works, but with no further clue to their author's identification. He wrote in high commendation of the beauty of his engravings, and the charm of his drawing the female figure, regarding him as a painter of eminence, although no picture by his hand had been recognized. The employment of his talents, however, was apparently limited to the production of his engravings, and to his occasional engagement, like his contemporary Zoan Andrea, in the illustration of the literature of the time.

A correspondence in style of his prints with those of Nicoletto da Modena has created the supposition that there was some association between them, the relationship of teacher and pupil being considered to have existed; but precedence, either in point of age, or priority of workmanship, there is nothing to indicate. On two of Giovanni Baptista del Porto's woodcuts, of S. Jerome (B. xiii., 249, 1), and the Three Graces (P. v., 153, 7), there is a second mark, of the letter "M," or two "A's" conjoined, of which no explanation has been attempted, save that it probably stands for Modena. An engraving by Giovanni Baptista del Porto, called by Passavant (v., 151, 12) Réunion de monstruosités (Les deux jumeaux), with a descriptive account in the lower margin of their having been born at Rome on the 15th April, 1503, tells us that there, most probably, the plate was

engraved. Bartsch gives particulars of it, but the mark and initials, which are at the foot, must have been removed from the impression he was acquainted with, as he placed it amongst the anonymous Italian engravings (B. xiii., 139, 70). One of the master's works, inscribed "ROMA", is of an allegorical figure, seated by a tree in front of an open arch, in the guise of a young man wearing a massive helmet, holding in his extended right hand a winged figure of Victory, the ground before him being covered with a pile of costly armour; and the introduction, in his print of Leda (B. 3), of the ruined temple of Minerva Medica at Rome, is confirmatory of the correctness of his presumed residence and employment in the city. His treatment of the story of Leda is extremely graceful, in the playfulness of the group of the mother seated on the ground with her four children, one of whom, with his right hand in the swan's bill, grasps with the other the pinion feather of its wing. Another representation, in the usual form, of Leda with the Swan (B. xiii., 280, 46), is described by Passavant (P. v., 151, 9) in two states:—in the first of them with the mark "I. B." and the bird, which in the second is obliterated, and replaced by one of the devices of Nicoletto da Modena, amongst whose works consequently the print, in its second state, was catalogued by Bartsch, as he was unacquainted with it in its earlier state. An impression of the print, with the Nicoletto da Modena device upon it, will be found mentioned in the ensuing account of that master's works.¹

Amongst other subjects from Mythology, is one of the Rape of Europa (B. 4), where the details of the background are imitated from certain of the prints of Albert Dürer: the print is in reverse of a similar engraving ascribed to Nicoletto da Modena, both of them being very similar in their composition.

¹ A niello, corresponding with it in composition, is ascribed by Duchesne (No. 235), in his "*Essai sur les Nielles*," to "Peregrini."

Giovanni Baptista del Porto's skill as a draughtsman is apparent, far more in his woodcuts than in his copper-plate engravings. Distinguished amongst them is an undescribed Crucifixion of Our Saviour between the two thieves : it is unsurpassed in the excellence and spirit of its drawing by any representation of the scene by the Northern engravers, his contemporaries, and by his own hand the cutting in the wood evidently was executed : the only known impression is in the writer's collection. The earnest treatment of all the assembled figures, and the expressiveness of the sorrow of the mourners around the Saviour's cross, refute the want of religious sentiment M. Galichon imputes to Giovanni Baptista del Porto. His effective representation of a Boar Hunt, called by Passavant (v., 153, 8) Meleager and Atalanta, is also apparently of his workmanship ; and so likewise is the subject of David (P. v., 152, 4), who stands with his right foot upon the severed head of Goliath, holding the point of his large scimitar-shaped sword propped on the giant's forehead ; the figure is very Florentine in drawing, the bright handsome face, and the luxuriance of thick hair, falling in curls over the shoulders, recalling the grace and fulness of expression of Filippo Lippi's teaching. An impression of the print is in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris. Dr. Lippmann adds to the list of the master's works a woodcut, upright in form, of Apollo and Daphne, in the Berlin Cabinet ; although it bears no mark, he considers it to have been executed by Giovanni Baptista del Porto, from its close resemblance to his print of Mars, Venus, and Vulcan (P. v., 152, 6).

The remunerative employment the painter-engravers had at their command, in illustrating the current literature of the day, which, we have seen Zoan Andrea was largely engaged in, was in like manner taken advantage of by Giovanni Baptista del Porto. In a volume—"Vita Miracolosa della Sancta Catherina da Siena—Stampata nella cipta di Siena, MDXXIII."—the title page is ornamented

with a woodcut of S. Catherine, marked with the initials "I. B. P." A copy of the book is in the Print Room of the British Museum. Another volume, a quarto edition of Boiardo's "Orlando innamorato," "Impresso in Venetia ꝑ Nicolo de Aristotile di Ferrara detto Zoppino, MDXXVIII.," commences with a figure of Orlando on horseback on the title-page of the poem, signed "IO. B. P.", and on the reverse of A. II there is a spirited battle scene signed "I. B. P." Additional interest attaches to the last-named volume, from there being other illustrations in it, as previously mentioned, by Zoan Andrea, proving that so late as 1528 the two engravers were working in association at Venice.





CHAPTER XVI.

NICOLETO DA MODENA.

NICOLETO DA MODENA, born, about 1450, in the city he derives his name from, was presumably a member of the *Rossi* family, from the inscription "OPUS NICOLETI MODENENSIS ROSEX" upon his print called the Judgment of Paris (B. xiii., 289, 62). His print of three children (P. v., 101, 107) bears likewise the inscription "OP. NICOLETI. DE. MVTINA. DE. RVBEIS" upon a scroll suspended on a leafless tree at the back. Zani, in his "Materiali" (103), first suggested the family association to be implied from these additions to the master's signature. Although in the days of his youth, which were passed there, Modena had not the advantage of a resident ruler within its walls, the artists, both painters and sculptors, who were assembled in the city, had long previously been celebrated for the talent they displayed, and for the numerous pupils trained under their guidance. For nearly two hundred years the princes of Ferrara preserved the sovereignty of Modena, and its sustentation as an adjunct to their dominion had been jealously maintained. Borso d'Este, who in 1450 had succeeded his brother Lionel in the marquisate, took a prominent lead in advancing the municipal privileges of the city, and in 1453 the Emperor Frederic III. raised him to the dignity of Duke of Modena.

M. Galichon, in an article entitled “*Rosex dit Nicoletto de Modène, graveur du xvi. siècle,*” in the “*Gazette des Beaux Arts*” for October, 1866 (xxi., 372), gives an account of “the grand and glorious influence on the intellectual and artistic movement in Italy” exercised by Hercules d’Este during the period of his reign, from 1471 to 1505, and by his son Alfonso who succeeded him. He tells us of the illustrious artists whose names are recorded in the annals of Modena, but he had failed to discover any personal information respecting Nicoletto da Modena, or of his parentage. Excessive eulogy of his great talent is all we gather from Lodovico Vedriani, the historian of Modena, in his “*Raccolta de’ Pittori Scultori e Architetti Modanesi,*” Modena, 1662.

The situation of Ferrara, in its more remote isolation from the range of the encroachments of the Papacy, was preferable as a residence, and there the Court of the reigning house had long been held.

The house of Este, one of the oldest amongst the Italian families, was distinguished for the chivalrous pride, wherewith the dignity of its long ancestral line had been sustained by the resolute chieftains who represented it. Despots although they were, like other the powerful princes of the age, there is a peculiar interest attaching to the bond of union, wherewith the sons, legitimate and illegitimate, of Nicolo III., Marquis of Ferrara, who died in 1441, clung together, at the sacrifice of much personal interest, in following out their father’s dying injunctions:—to sustain the honour of the house, in saving their extensive and wealthy territory from the miseries of domestic warfare, and in promoting the position of prosperity it had been raised to.

With the concurrence of the nobles of the state, Nicolo, on his death bed, his legitimate son and successor, Hercules, being in his infancy, appointed his eldest illegitimate son, Lionel, who had been trained in every manly acquirement, to succeed him, and very ably did he respond to his father’s

selection. Accomplished as a soldier, he was, moreover, skilled in science and learned in literature, and for the ten years during which he held the reins of government, his efforts were strenuously directed to the encouragement of the arts of peace, and the improvement of the city and its institutions. He re-established the University of Ferrara, which had fallen into decay, and its endowment was subsequently greatly enhanced by his brother Borso, who enriched its library with the donation of numerous MSS.

Borso d'Este, who had lived with his brother on terms of fraternal affection, took up the administration on Lionel's death in 1450, with the concurrence of the legitimate heir, Hercules, who was then in his nineteenth year, and already had shown himself to be a valiant soldier, and competent, from his own ability, and the powerful connections ready to support him, to have claimed the succession. But no thought of such assertion of his right apparently was entertained, and his efforts were directed to support his brother in his politic rule. The aid Borso had been able to render in the wars with the Turks, engaged the protection of the German Emperor and of the Pope to save the principality from diminution of its domain, and the crowning effort of Borso's life was to secure the aggrandizement of the marquisate. He had, as previously mentioned, been created Duke of Modena by the Emperor Frederic in 1453. In 1470 he journeyed to Rome, in a state of health incapable of bearing the fatigue, and, having succeeded in acquiring the coveted title of Duke of Ferrara, and the gift of the Holy Rose, bestowed upon him by Paul II., he went back to Ferrara, and died within two months of his return.

Disturbed as Modena long had been by the impending inroad of the Papal troops, Nicoletto da Modena must have early sought at Ferrara the patronage of the family in whose dominions he had been born, and who were not likely to allow the young artist's talents to remain in obscurity. The

fluent style of his drawing, significant of the access he had enjoyed in his youth to the 'sculptors' studios in his native town, is accompanied with such fanciful buoyancy of composition, that the works of his pencil must, from their own merit, have early attracted appreciative recognition.

Hercules d'Este, on the death of his brother Borso in 1471, succeeded in his fortieth year to the dukedom. His early days had been passed at Naples, where he was in high repute for his manly bearing and his genial manners. He became a distinguished soldier, and for some time held important command in the armies of the Medici at Florence. The duke had married Eleonora, daughter of Ferdinand, King of Naples, and on his taking up his residence at Ferrara with his young wife, a brilliant Court speedily gathered around them. Wits, and poets, and artists were attracted by the fêtes and pageants the city became renowned for. Eminent for his love of scientific pursuits and his varied attainments, the duke drew together a crowd of professors and students, by his encouragement of learning, especially promoted by the printing presses he set up, which were celebrated during a long subsequent period for the works they continued to issue. Amongst the distinguished names in the annals of Ferrara is that of Lodovico Ariosto, son of one of the duke's captains, who was born at Reggio, where his father was governor, in 1474. Lodovico Ariosto was enrolled in his youth amongst the officers of the retinue of the duke's second son, Ippolito, and became extremely popular for his accomplishments and his lyrical compositions, the cantos of his "*Orlando Furioso*" being received with critical appreciation as the poem progressed towards completion. The first edition of the poem was printed at Ferrara in 1516.

The training Duke Hercules had received, coupled with his shrewd natural talent, and his personal prowess and skill as a military commander, enabled him to uphold his power throughout the thirty-four years of his reign, and to ward

off the advance of the French into his dominions. Soon after his accession, a conspiracy, which had been fostered in support of Nicolo, the son of his brother and predecessor Lionel, culminated, in the autumn of 1476, in the admission of a body of infantry into the city, who dispersed themselves throughout its streets, calling upon the inhabitants to acknowledge their leader. The attempt failed to arouse any effort in its support: Nicolo and his immediate adherents were captured and beheaded, and those of his followers who had succeeded in making their escape were pursued with persevering determination and exterminated. The safeguard against the success of the conspiracy consisted in the firm hold the duke had acquired in the hearts of his subjects, by his persistent efforts in abstaining from war with the neighbouring states, and by his cultivation of all the arts of peace, and the prosperity and domestic tranquillity that was enjoyed in consequence.

Amongst the various pursuits the duke directed his attention to, was the establishment of a manufactory of majolica within the precincts of the palace. The products probably were but limited, and sufficient only for his own requirements, for which they would seem to have been reserved, certain pieces "*de la fabrique du chateau*" being enumerated in an inventory, which has been preserved, of the effects of his son, the Cardinal Ippolito. The popularity of the manufacture of the new *faïence* in the early years of the sixteenth century sustained, as the costliness of the production needed, by the princes of the time, raised some few other potteries into eminence, attributable in no small degree to the interest taken in them by Titian and the Venetian artists, and the beautiful lusted pieces that were produced from the drawings they supplied. In the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" for 1864 (v. xvii., pp. 150-212), there is an essay upon "*La Majolique et la porcelaine de Ferrare*," by Giuseppe Campori, descriptive of the works that were carried out, and the artists employed. The compositions

of Nicoletto da Modena are of frequent occurrence in many of the rare early specimens, and the fanciful inventions in his engravings, tell of their adaptability for the ornamentation of pottery. An arabesque (B. xiii., 286, 58), engraved and signed with Nicoletto da Modena's name, is a wonderful piece of ingenuity, with its elaboration of grotesques and chimerical animals. His panels of ornament abound with a fancifulness of design, unsurpassed, in their harmony of arrangement, by similar specimens of any other artist. In his early years he evidently had pursued a course of architectural training, so accurate is his treatment of the palatial buildings he introduced into his prints; the skilfulness of drawing of the ruin they are represented in evinces a thorough acquaintance with the laws of construction, and careful academical teaching had qualified him for the precision wherewith the undraped figures in his compositions are delineated.

No frescoes or paintings by Nicoletto da Modena's hand have been preserved, and we are left to the prints alone for our acquaintance with his talent, save the occasional recognition of his designs upon rare examples of majolica. They tell us of his skilled capacity for the works of decoration he throughout a considerable period of time was employed upon.

The motive for Nicoletto da Modena's engravings is for the most part subsidiary to the backgrounds they are represented in, composed of palatial ruins and landscapes of greatly diversified picturesqueness. There is a remote, but distinct connexion between the prints of Nicoletto da Modena, and the first states of those of Martino da Udine (Pellegrino), who for some years was employed by Duke Hercules, and by his son and successor Alphonso, in the decoration of the Palace of Ferrara: the relationship is perceptible, not only in the sentiment, but in the pose and negligence of attitude of the figures they each introduced in their compositions.

Irrespective of the seven nielli attributed by M. Galichon to Nicoletto da Modena, his prints amount to upwards of ninety in number, a large proportion being marked with his name or initials, accompanied by a device, in varied form, of a vase with flowers, and leafed branches at the sides ; upon three of them we have the dates 1500, 1501, and 1512. A list of his prints is given by M. Galichon in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (vols. ii. and iv., 2nd period, pp. 145 and 244) : some few others, unknown to M. Galichon, are in the British Museum. Their subjects are of incidents in Bible History, supplemented by figures of the Saints of the Christian Church, and of personages in the Heathen Mythology, followed by sundry allegories, and the designs for ornament we have referred to. Two small niello-like prints,—of David, and of Judith, are the only compositions from the Old Testament History attributed to him. His selections from the New Testament are mainly of Our Saviour's Nativity, there being three representations of it.

The second in order in Bartsch's list of these prints of the Nativity (B. xiii., 256, 4), is one of the most beautiful of Nicoletto da Modena's engravings, in the distinctness of detail of its elaborate architecture : the Infant Saviour lies recumbent in front, upon a large wicker basket, the kneeling Madonna, inclining over Him with clasped hands, being at the right, and S. Joseph leaning on his staff is at the left ; the group is in the nave of a massive church in ruins, the receding arches terminating in an opening at the east end, where, in the space beyond, a representation of the Annunciation is introduced : amidst the side columns the shepherds, variously occupied, and the ox and the ass, are introduced. Nicoletto da Modena evidently was not endowed with the reflectiveness essential for the portrayal of the events of the Passion ; his only attempt at their illustration is in three separate figures of Our Saviour, who, in the second of them, attended by five angels (B. 21), is seated on the sepulchre, pressing his hand upon the wound in His side. M. Galichon

remarks, "Elle est la seule de l'œuvre dans laquelle on trouve l'intention de représenter une scène pathétique ; mais il faut bien reconnaître que Nicoletto n'y a guère réussi. Le Christ est sans dignité et les anges grimacent sans pleurer."

In his subjects, however, from the life of the Madonna, and especially in that of her enthronement (P. v., 95, 73), which is the largest of his prints, we have the happiest effort of Nicoletto da Modena's talent. The Madonna, with the Infant Saviour in her arms, is seated on a richly-carved throne, two angels being in the air above, holding a crown over her head : in niches at the side stand, on the right S. Lucia, with the inscription "SĀTA LVCIA VIRGO," on the frieze above, and on the left S. Catherine, with the inscription "SĀTA CATERINA VIRGO." A lamp, festooned with garlands of fruit and flowers, in the midst of which two birds are perched, is suspended above ; the impressiveness of this, the most majestic of his compositions, is lightened of its solemnity, by the introduction of a large chained monkey in the foreground. On the pilasters at the sides is written, on the left "ALTO," and on the right the date "MDI." ; the legend "REGINA CELI LETARE ALELVIA" is in front, and a cartouch at the foot inscribed "NICOLAVS MVTINSIS FECIT." An impression of the print is in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris ; the only known example in England is in the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth ; it measures, H. 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, W. 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

There are amongst Nicoletto da Modena's prints upwards of twenty-five representations of the saints and martyrs of the Christian Church, consisting of full-length single figures, recognizable by the emblems of their martyrdom, with no attempt to delineate the incidents of it ;—they are placed in the centre of elaborate backgrounds, in every variety of fanciful scenery. Noticeable amongst them are S. George (P. 80), arrayed in costly armour, and S. Catherine (P. 84), costumed in a richly brocaded robe with a crown on her head,

surrounded by a nimbus ; they both stand in the midst of buildings of colossal proportions, arranged with much cleverness of invention. S. Sebastian was a favourite saint with Nicoletto da Modena, from the opportunity the undraped figure afforded him of displaying his skill in drawing from the nude : in addition to the three prints of the saint included in M. Galichon's list, two others, previously undescribed, are in the British Museum : one is signed with the letters "N. I." ; the other has no mark, but is manifestly by Nicoletto da Modena ; the figure of the saint, bound to the pier of the massive building at the back, is exceptional in its gracefulness ; a picturesque landscape is seen through the arches at the sides.

His subjects from the Mythology are less noticeable for the originality of their composition ; the most imaginative amongst them is an arrangement of rocks and foliage, crowded with the birds and animals attendant upon Orpheus, who is seated on the left, taming them with his music (B. 53).

Very clever in drawing is a group of seven children (B. 37), gathered in animated action around an anvil, whereon a human tongue is held by one of them with a pair of pincers, the others being occupied beating it with hammers : from the inscription "LINGVA PRAVORVM PERIBIT," the designation of the Fate of the Evil Tongue has been given to it. The representation of a popular allegory of the time is catalogued by Bartsch amongst the works of Nicoletto da Modena by the title of *La Fortune* (B. 38) ; a naked woman faced to the front, with folds of drapery fluttering in the wind at her back, stands with her left foot resting on a ship's rudder, and her right foot on a globe floating on an inland sea, the cities of the earth being drawn on the globe ; the scene is bounded, on the left, by rocks and buildings, and, on the right, by similar structures with the water washing the base of them. The left hand of Fortune is upraised in an action of warning, cor-

responding with the stern expression of her face, and the right hand, directed downward by her side, has a blank tablet suspended on the forefinger, and sustains a long rod, surmounted by a youthful human face with streaming hair. The features have much of the character of Florentine drawing; but the accessories of the surrounding scenery, with the peculiar form of rock bounding the water on the left, are exactly in correspondence with the treatment of Nicoletto da Modena's landscapes. The print is not in Ottley's list, from which are omitted all prints not marked with signature or initials, and M. Galichon places it with three others, considered by him to be of doubtful authenticity, at the end of his account of the seven nielli attributed to the master ("Gazette des Beaux Arts," ix., 2nd period, p. 164). Far more distinctively by his hand, in careful finish of execution, is the series of three allegorical figures, uniform in size—Victory (P. 98), signed "VITORIA", with the initials "N R M", Fame (P. 99), signed "FAMA VOLAT", with the initials "N. M.", and Peace (B. 36), signed "PAX. E.", with the same initials.

A print of Apelles (P. 104) supports its claim to be of Nicoletto da Modena's workmanship, from the addition of his device upon the pedestal Apelles stands in front of, and from the peculiarities of the landscape; the figure is ungainly and expressionless in drawing, with the head inclined, contemplating the cubes drawn on a board propped upon the pedestal, but has little resemblance with the drawing for a statue of Virgil in the His de la Salle collection at Paris, ascribed to Mantegna, wherewith the print is compared by M. Galichon.¹

Several of the early anonymous prints of the Florentine school were incorrectly included in Bartsch's catalogue of the master's prints. The influence upon him of the en-

¹ A copy of the drawing is given in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" (xx., 486).

gravings of Martin Schöngauer and Albert Dürer is discussed by M. Galichon in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (xxi., 373). The group of the Holy Family and the Shepherds in his print of the Nativity (B. 3), is described as adapted from a similar composition by Martin Schöngauer (B. vi., 120, 4), and he copied "*Le Départ pour le marché*" from the print by the same German engraver (B. vi., 157, 88), signing it "*OP. NICOLET DE MVTINA.*" An anonymous imitation, bearing no mark (P. 71), of Our Saviour's appearance to the Magdalene by Martin Schöngauer (B. vi., 26), is likewise attributed to Nicoletto da Modena by Passavant, his description being taken from an impression of the print in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris.

The group of four naked women (B. vii., 89, 75) by Albert Dürer was utilized by Nicoletto da Modena, with sundry modifications, for his print called the Judgment of Paris (B. 62). The title thus given to it was derived from the words "*DETVR PVLCRIORI*" added to the globe suspended over the heads of the figures: the signature, "*OPVS NICOLETI,*" on the left, and "*MODENENSIS ROSEX*", on the right, is inscribed at the bottom of the print. In the Rape of Europa (B. 51) there are points of resemblance with the landscapes of three of Albert Dürer's prints:—the Madonna with a monkey (B. vii., 42), the Rape of Amymone (B. vii., 71), and the Monstrous Pig (B. vii., 95). The print of the Rape of Europa is excluded by M. Galichon from his list of the master's works, being designated by him as an inferior copy in reverse, by an unknown engraver, of the print of the subject by Giovanni Baptista del Porto ("*Gazette des Beaux Arts,*" iv., 262, 4). M. Galichon recognized in the Cumean Sibyl (P. 86), an adaptation from the small Fortune of Albert Dürer (B. vii., 78), and in the Huntsman (B. 63), from the horse of the small Courier (B. vii., 80). An undescribed copy of Albert Dürer's print of an Oriental and his Wife (B. vii., 85), marked with the letters "*N. R. M.*" has been placed with Nicoletto da Modena's prints in the British Museum.

Beyond the use thus made of the works of the German engravers, we find no evidence of the influence they are alleged to have exercised upon Nicoletto da Modena. M. Galichon, in his notice of the attributed copy from Martin Schöngauer, of Our Saviour appearing to the Magdalene, states that "Nicoletto, as in his other copies after the German masters, preserved his Italian character." His drawing, in fact, is thoroughly Italian in all his productions. A print of Leda (B. xiii., 280, 46), previously referred to (p. 251) in the account of Giovanni Baptista del Porto, catalogued by Bartsch amongst the works of Nicoletto da Modena, is, according to Passavant (v., 151, 9), a late impression from a plate engraved by Giovanni Baptista del Porto. Passavant describes it in its first state, marked with the "I.B." and a bird, and in a second state, where the mark is worked over in diagonal hatching, with the addition of one of Nicoletto da Modena's devices. An impression, in this later state, is arranged in the British Museum collection amongst the prints of Nicoletto da Modena. The falsification imputed in V^{te}. Delaborde's "Gravure en Italie" (p. 152), can scarcely be regarded as the master's work; the alteration was most probably effected in after years by some publisher, into whose hands the plate had fallen, who considered the added mark was the more popular one to insure a sale.

The panels of ornament engraved by Nicoletto da Modena have previously been commented upon. M. Galichon contributed an article to the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" (ix., 2nd period, 164), enumerating seven nielli as of Nicoletto da Modena's workmanship; copies of the first, second, and seventh of them accompany the text. The first is the David (B. 1) of Bartsch's list of the copper-plate engravings, followed by three small prints (B. 66, 67, and 68), added by Bartsch in an appendix at the end of his list, as attributed to Nicoletto da Modena; the other three are,—a figure of Mercury, a second figure of David, and a small "mascaron"

with two children, upon which, and upon the figure of Mercury, as well as upon the second figure of David, are the letters "N. O.", interpreted to be the initials of "Nicoleti Opus." Duchesne, in his "Essai" (p. 82), states that "others (nielli) are certainly by the hand of Nicolas Rosex." Beyond the ascription thus made of these small prints, all of them being of extremely doubtful authenticity, there is no evidence that Nicoletto da Modena applied himself to working in niello.

The printing presses established by Duke Hercules at Ferrara, which he and his family took such interest in the direction of, were celebrated for the books issued from them, ornamented with illustrative designs in their pages.

Distinguished amidst the literary society gathered at Ferrara was Jacobus Philippus, an Eremite friar of the family of the Foresti of Bergamo, where he was born in 1434; in his eighteenth year he entered the convent of the Augustines. In 1494 he was made a prior of his order, and died at Bergamo, whither he had returned, in 1520. The learned friar held the appointment of professor of languages in the University at Ferrara, and was brought into acquaintance with the Duchess Eleonora and the members of her family, through their love of literature, and the personal superintendence they devoted to the publication of some of the costly volumes that were printed at the presses Duke Hercules had established. The friar had resided for some years previously in Venice, where, in 1483, he issued a chronicle, succeeded by an enlarged edition of it in folio, printed first at Brescia in 1485, and subsequently at Venice in October, 1486, with the title "*Opus preclarum Supplementum chronicarum vulgo appellatum: in omnimoda historia novissime congesta fratris Jacobi Philippi Bergomensis religionis heremitarum divi Augustini decoris quod faustissime inchoat.*" The book must have been extremely popular, judging from the pleasant colloquial style it is written in, and the numerous subsequent editions it went

through. The woodcuts in the text, first printed in the edition of 1486, with the exception of an illustration of the fall of our first parents, and another of the story of Cain and Abel, are limited to rude outline views of certain of the cities of the world. At the commencement of the volume there is an arabesque border, one of the many attractive specimens of similar ornamentation in the books of the time, surrounding the representation of the Six Days of Creation, printed from a block, subsequently used for a small quarto Bible, published by Symon Bevilaqua at Venice in 1498.

The author made the announcement of an intended publication of the memoirs of celebrated women he was engaged in compiling, which aroused the very commendable desire to secure a favourable mention in his promised history, and procured him a ready welcome amongst the ladies assembled at Ferrara, which for some time had been the scene of more than wonted gaiety and activity, occasioned by the presence in the city of the suitors, and the members of their families, in quest of the coveted honour of an alliance with the duke's daughters Isabella and Beatrix.

The memoirs were completed and published in 1497, with the title "*De plurimis claris sceletisq; Mulieribus Opus prope diuinuꝝ nouissime congestum—Ferrarie impressuꝝ. Opera & ĩpensa Magistri Laurentii de rubeis de Valentia. tertio kal. maias. anno salutis n̄re. M.cccclxxxvii. Religioso Inuictissq; p̄ncipe: Diuo Hercule: Duce secundo: Ferrariēsibus legiptime Imperante.*"¹

¹ A copy of the book was offered for sale in London in 1883, described as unique, of a "first edition, four years prior to the known issue of 1497. *Ferrariæ L. de Rubeis, 1493.*" At the foot of the page, on the reverse of "Fo. clxix", "Finis" is printed. The last leaf, "Fo. clxx," with the colophon "*Laurentii de Rubeis, 1497,*" was wanting in the copy in question, and in its place there was an added leaf, with a substituted colophon, and the date 1493.

The book will be found elsewhere mentioned (p. 369), in the subsequent account of Leonardo da Vinci, with reference to a portrait of the Duke of Ferrara's second daughter, Beatrix, who became the wife of Lodovico Sforza. It is illustrated throughout with very spirited outline portraits: three pages at the commencement are surrounded by borders, also in outline, and in the centre of the first of them there is an illustration of the author—"Frater Jacobus Philippus Bergomensis ordinis Heremitarum"—presenting his book to Beatrix, Queen of Aragon, Hungary, and Bohemia, wife of King Corvinus, celebrated for his magnificent library.¹ A brief history of the Madonna, her presentation in the temple, and her coronation, with six other incidents in her life, being represented within another of the bordered pages, precedes the memoirs of the illustrious women, which, commencing with those of Eve, are chosen from sacred and profane history, followed by the lives of female saints and celebrities of the Christian Church, amongst whom Pope Joan and the Empress Matilda are included.

At the end of the volume, the lives of ladies, the immediate relatives and connections of the Ducal house of Ferrara, are given, and all of them are described, without one sinner amongst them, in unvarying terms of laudation of their great piety and virtue, from which the popularity of the courtly friar can be well understood.² Our interest

¹ Beatrix, the wife of King Corvinus, was a daughter of Ferdinand, King of Naples, and sister, consequently, of the Duchess of Ferrara. On the death of Corvinus, she married Ladislas, King of Bohemia. So soon as his power was secured, Ladislas applied the wealth he had acquired with his wife, in bribing the Pope, Alexander VI., and procuring a divorce. Beatrix retired to, and died in the island of Ischia.

² A long memoir is given of the Duchess Eleonora, who died in October, 1493, in the ducal palace, in her forty-fourth year, of a slow fever she for some time had been afflicted with. The successive births of her four sons and two daughters, and various incidents in her life, are narrated, with an account of her dying admonitions to her children. Her eldest son Alphonso, with his wife Anna, were in attendance upon her, and her

in the volume is enhanced by the portraits interspersed in the text, and the beautiful borders surrounding the pages at the commencement. These borders have great similarity with that of the Chronicle, printed some few years previously at Venice by the author (p. 266), suggesting the question, whether he was possessed of the skill to produce them, amongst his other accomplishments.

A folio edition of the works of S. Jerome was published in the same year, by the same printer, in different type, Roman instead of Gothic being used, except for the title, which is a noble specimen of Gothic lettering: "*Vita epistole de sancto hieronimo vulgare:—Impressa—como di iocunde caractere & figure ornata ne la cita de Ferrara: per Maestro Lorenzo di Rossi da Valenza: M.CCCC.XCVII. A di. XII de Octobre. Regnante Principe messer Hercule Estense Duce secondo.*" The volume is distinguished by the profusion of its ornamentation, the text being illustrated with small designs of the incidents of the Saint's life and ministry, of much beauty in their drawing, and in the sharp distinct outline they are engraved with: certain of the preliminary pages are surrounded by outline borders, printed from the blocks used for the volume "*De claris mulieribus.*" In the centre of one of them, on the verso of an engraved title to the Epistles, we have the announcement (in Latin) that "through the munificence and liberality of Eleonora, Duchess of Ferrara, and her daughter Isabella, Queen of Mantua, this divine work of the saintly S. Jerome has been brought into the light in the year 1495."¹ The duchess died, as we learn from the preceding account of her, in October, 1493. The publication of the volume had been a labour of love to her and her eldest daughter Isabella, upon whom the duty devolved of acting as sponsor to

exhortations to him, to follow the example of his father, bear testimony to the affectionate relationship which existed between them.

¹ In a later edition, a woodcut of S. Jerome seated at a desk writing his Epistles is substituted for this inscription.

the work she and her mother had undertaken. Francesco Gonzaga was the successful suitor for the hand of Isabella; they were married in 1490, and mention of her name is made in the foregoing account of Andrea Mantegna during the last years of his life. The volume is an interesting record of the literary pursuits of two illustrious ladies of the time, amidst the distraction of the festivities and ceremonies their daily life had to be passed in.





CHAPTER XVII.

GIULIO AND DOMENICO CAMPAGNOLA. GIROLAMO CAMPAGNOLA. MARTINO DA UDINE (PELLEGRINO). MARCELLO FOGOLINO.



THE city of Padua, from an early period, held a prominent position as one of the great centres of educational training and culture in Italy, and the members of the House of Carrara, who retained the government throughout the greater part of the fourteenth century, were distinguished amongst the princes of the time for their learning and accomplishments, and for their liberal patronage of art, and the intellectual society they gathered around them. Petrarch dedicated his work "*De Republica optime administranda*" to Francesco Carrara, who had sent him to Venice in 1373, as his representative, to settle the terms of a peace he had concluded with the Senate. Before the end of the century hostilities were renewed, and, after a succession of reverses, the Paduan troops succumbed to the Venetians, who took possession of the city in 1405: Francesco and his sons, who were the last of the race of Carrara, were consigned to the dungeons of S. Mark, and strangled there in 1406, and the dominion passed into the power of the Republic. The University, founded originally by the Emperor Frederic II. in the thirteenth century, had been enlarged by the transference from Bologna of the students assembled

there, and was still further developed in its educational activity and usefulness under the Venetian government.

The position held by Francesco Squarcione in Padua in the fifteenth century has previously been described. He was a citizen of respectable position, an amateur of painting, with some skill in its exercise, who devoted his leisure, and the means he derived from a small inherited patrimony, to the cultivation of the study of painting, and the training the numerous pupils who flocked to him for instruction, in the strict observance of the classical rules of drawing he exacted the observance of, resulting in the creation of a school at Padua, which speedily extended its influence throughout Italy.

Squarcione was engaged in carrying out a contract for the restoration of the chapel of S. Christopher in the church of the Eremitani, and Andrea Mantegna and his fellow pupils had in 1450 made considerable progress with the frescoes on the walls of the chapel with representations of scenes in the life of S. Christopher, at the time when Donatello was in residence in Padua.

The erection in the city of a colossal equestrian statue of the condottiere Gattamelata, the commander of the Venetian armies, had been entrusted by the Signiory to Donatello, with the further commission to construct a monument to his memory in the church of San Antonio.

The great church of San Antonio was a shrine of devotional attraction, during the fifteenth century, to the artists of the time, and the liberal contributions made in its adornment rendered it one of the most richly decorated ecclesiastical edifices in Europe. Donatello reconstructed the high altar of the church with bronze reliefs of the miracles of S. Anthony, placing at the sides life-size statues of SS. Louis and Prosdecimus the first bishop of the see, and ornamented the Sacrament chapel, erected by the widow of Gattamelata over the tomb where her husband and his son were buried: the equestrian statue of the

eminent soldier is on a lofty pedestal, in front of the church,¹ inscribed "Opus Donatelli Flor."

From the association which arose with Donatello, and the skilled assistants in his employ, during the years he was at work upon the commissions he had undertaken, the principles inculcated by the great sculptor exercised material influence over Squarcione and his pupils, and the pupils in the school of Jacopo Bellini, who, with his sons, had for some years been resident in Padua.

Donatello on the completion of his engagements took his departure from the city, and the students and sculptors, who had co-operated with him, were scattered and dispersed. In 1460, Andrea Mantegna, who had married Nicolosia the daughter of Jacopo Bellini, also left the city, on his acceptance of the offers made to him by Lodovico Gonzaga, and went to Mantua: and concurrently nearly with his departure, Jacopo Bellini and his family removed to Venice.

For some years the school which Squarcione had established continued unabated in its usefulness, until the founder's death, in his eightieth year, in 1474.

The interest created in the works we have referred to, and the adherence to the rules of classical treatment pursued by the artists congregated in the city, in the middle of the fifteenth century, whilst engaged in the conduct of the commissions entrusted to them, exercised an abiding influence upon the cultivated taste of the society of Padua, which long remained distinguished both in literature and art for the high standard of critical judgment it maintained. The practice of engraving, in early succession to its development under the hand of Mantegna in Mantua, became known and was brought into operation in Padua, and from the productions of the Campagnola we derive our acquaintance with the skill attained in its exercise.

¹ There is a portrait of Gattamelata ascribed to Giorgione in the Uffizi at Florence.

The family of Campagnola held prominent rank in the city, Girolamo, the father, being the official representative of the Venetian Republic. He was a man of refined and varied acquirements, and had studied painting in the school of Squarcione. From a letter, written by him to Leonico Tomeo, Vasari gained his information respecting Andrea Mantegna, and his adoption by Squarcione: in another letter to the same correspondent he gave an account of the painters who had been employed by the Carrara family. Leonico Tomeo, professor of Greek in the University, was a leading member of its learned society: he materially influenced the taste of the time, and had formed a choice collection of works of art, alluded to by Vasari, to which, from his father's intimacy with its possessor, and his own accomplishments, Giulio Campagnola had freedom of access:¹ another of his friends was Matteo Bosso, to whose house in Ravenna Giulio accompanied his father on his magisterial visits. In one of Matteo Bosso's letters, quoted by M. Galichon in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (xiii., 333), addressed to Hector Theophanes, he writes in terms of eulogy of the great abilities and natural talent of Giulio Campagnola, who was then a youth, remarking "that he could rival the greatest masters, and that there was not a picture, however perfect, of Mantegna or Bellini, he could not faithfully reproduce, when he chose to devote his attention to it"; adding, that he had great skill in portrait painting from the life.

GIULIO CAMPAGNOLA.

Giulio Campagnola was born about 1481. The learned son of a learned father, he had been educated in the know-

¹ Scardeonius, "*De antiquitate urbis Patavii*" (1560), referred to by Morelli in his "*Notizia*" (101), is the authority for our knowledge respecting Girolamo Campagnola; and Zanetti enumerates in his "*Calcographie*" (p. 167) the different works he was the writer of.

ledge of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages; he was taught Greek when he was of the tenderest age.¹ Early in life he was, as intimated in the previously-quoted communication from Matteo Bosso, living on terms of friendship with the artists and scholars of the city, and attained great skill as a painter. Endowed, as we gather from the letters relating to him, with much beauty of person and attractiveness of manner, he was received with a ready welcome at Ferrara, whither he had gone in 1498, on the invitation of Duke Hercules, who gave him an appointment in the palace.

The before-mentioned letters of Matteo Bosso, first published at Mantua in 1498, supply the principal information we have respecting Giulio Campagnola. The extracts from them in Passavant's preliminary notice are taken from an edition published at Bologna in 1627; and from a letter dated "Veronæ xvi. Kal. Febr: 1498", addressed to the father, we learn that his son Giulio, at the commencement of that year, went to the Court of Duke Hercules: in another letter, written four years previously, from the text of which an extract has been given, the writer comments in highly eulogistic terms upon the learning and accomplishments of Giulio, scarcely turned ten years of age. Passavant (v., 164) gives a quotation from Renouard's "*Annales de l'Imprimerie des Alde*" of the directions in the will of the elder Aldus, who died at Venice on the 6th February, 1516, respecting some Italian type he desired should be cut by Giulio Campagnola, "*genio a ninno secondo ed incisore insigne*," in which year, therefore, we

¹ Morelli, in his "*Notizia*" (130), prints the text, from Scardeonius, of the letter of Matteo Bosso to Girolamo Campagnola, written about 1494:—"*Vix tertium ingressus lustrum ingenio & natura non est Lippo (Aurelio Brandolino) absimilis: quin præter litteras tum Latinas tum Græcas, impuber iste & lyram tractare, & in ea canere, versus edere, &, quod cæcus non potest, scribere, pingere, statuas atque signa fingere sic per se se magis, ut puto, duce natura, quam arte, perdidicit; ut temporibus nostris omnibus illi tantis in rebus simul possit meo judicio conferri nemo.*"

learn Giulio Campagnola was still living, and eminent as a type-cutter. Further record is limited to laudatory notices, in the poems of his friends, of his accomplishments and popularity.

No picture by the hand of Giulio Campagnola has been recognized:¹ his great talent as a draughtsman is commemorated by the few rare engravings he executed, and from them alone we arrive at an acquaintance with it. Failure of health, or some other necessity, we may presume, occasioned his discontinuance of an occupation which, from the spirit shown in its exercise, must have been to him a great source of enjoyment.

The most important of Giulio Campagnola's engravings is a majestic figure of S. John the Baptist, looking forward holding the chalice (B. xiii., 371, 3), copied in reverse, with a different background, from the engraving by Moceto (B. xiii., 219, 5), after a drawing by Mantegna. Moceto's print is more in harmony with the great painter's conception of the subject; Giulio Campagnola's adaptation of it however is invested with much interest, in its illustration of the process he first introduced, of finishing his shadows with minute dots, instead of in lines; the effect is extremely artistic, but the engraving needs to be seen in an early state of its printing, as the tender incision of the stippled work soon wore down, leaving only the deep-cut outline;—for impressions were taken from the plate after all the delicate shading had perished. Close to the lower margin is the inscription, "Appresso Nicolo Nelli in Venetia"; it is the first known occurrence of a publisher's name affixed to an engraving in Italy, and was frequently cut away, through

¹ The "Anonimo" of Morelli (19) mentions two miniatures by Giulio Campagnola on goat-skin—one of a naked woman seen by the back, after Giorgione, and the other of a naked woman watering a shrub, with two children fighting, after (Benedetto) Diana; and a picture of a Dead Christ sustained by angels, by one of his pupils, which belonged to M. Carlo Bembo.

the ignorance of possessors, with the view apparently of creating a supposititious early state, as is the case with the impression in the British Museum. Some slight clue to the date of Giulio Campagnola's prints is derived from the copies he made after Albert Dürer, whose engravings had excited much attention on the occasion of his visit to Venice in 1506. In the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris there is a copy (P. v., 165, 10) in reverse, of Albert Dürer's S. Genevieve (B. vii., 79, 63), of which no other impression appears to be known, signed "IVLIVS CAMPAGNOLA ANTENOREVS." We have the further notification of Giulio Campagnola's Paduan citizenship, in a similar signature in full on his print of Ganimede (B. 5), the landscape being derived from the Dürer Holy Family of the Madonna with the Monkey (B. vii., 42). Passavant catalogues amongst Giulio Campagnola's works a group (P. v., 166, 14) imitated from the animals in Dürer's prints of Adam and Eve, and S. Hubert: there is no mark upon it, and the correctness of the ascription of this so-called Campagnola print is extremely doubtful.

The stippled shading was too evanescent for general adoption, as the thin point it had to be punctured with speedily became exhausted: impressions of the prints with the full delicate tone of their first printing are extremely scarce. Fine examples of some of the smaller prints are in the British Museum; an Antlered Stag (P. 15), recumbent at the foot of a tree, is one of the most carefully finished, equalled by a companion representation of a similar stag browsing in a meadow (P. 16).

A Child with three Cats (P. 13), in the British Museum, no other impression being known of it, shows in the clearness of its printing, how few impressions could be obtained from such slightly incised workmanship; a clever fac-simile precedes the title-page of the catalogue of the Wilson collection, from which the print was obtained. Another similar print is a study of a naked woman, reclining asleep in a

wood (P. 11), stippled throughout, with no apparent outline; the character of the original design is imitated in the clever gradation of tone preserved in the foliage of the trees, copied evidently from a drawing by Giorgione.

The British Museum is in possession of two impressions of the print of a young Shepherd (B. 6), which explain the method the engraver pursued with his new process; the first, drawn in slight clear lines, gives merely the sketch of the composition, before any shadow was introduced; the second is completed in the dotted manner, with full colour throughout. The Astrologer (B. 8), finished by the same process, is apparently from a study of a picture by Giorgione in the Belvedere at Vienna; it is the only example of the master's work bearing a date, the year 1509 being inscribed at the bottom of the globe in front of the astrologer. Amongst several copies of this print, there is one by Agostino Veneziano, without the stippling, marked 1514.

In Giulio Campagnola's later works he made a partial use only of the new process; highly appreciable amongst them, from its close resemblance in drawing to another sketch by Giorgione it evidently is taken from, is a print of the interview of Our Saviour with the woman of Samaria at the well (B. 2); the dotted shading is introduced in the figures, and is partially made use of in the undulations of the ground, and portions of the landscape. Passavant (v., 165, 9) describes a print of Tobias and the Angel, from an example in the Malaspina collection, signed "IVLIVS . CAMP . PAT . F ."

By far the most attractive of the Campagnola prints, copied from another of Giorgione's drawings, is a party of four musicians, assembled under a clump of trees, called by Bartsch *A Concert* (B. xiii., 383, 9); a woman, playing a flute, is in the recess of the foliage, with a companion by her side; another of the party is seated in front, on the left by the margin, with a lute; whilst the fourth, on the right, leans forward, holding a rebec propped on the ground, and the end

of the bow over the stream which flows by the bank he reclines upon ; some sheep, crowding forward to the water, are seen amidst the rushes behind him, giving a pastoral character to the composition, and the landscape extends across an intervening range of country to some massive buildings, with an amphitheatre in ruins, on the high land at the right ; the foliage with its clever *chiar'-oscuro* effect, and the unshaded stems of the trees, are thrown forward very artistically by the dark shadows at the back. The print is attributed by Bartsch to Domenico, but has far more the character of Giulio Campagnola's workmanship.

Several writers have endeavoured to elucidate the family connection between the two engravers, without arriving at any distinct definition of it, beyond the circumstance of their intimacy and association in the same city. In the "*Biografia degli artisti Padovani*" by Napoleone Pietrucci (Padua, 1858) it is stated that Giulio Campagnola was born about 1452, and Domenico about 1484 ; the first of these dates is clearly erroneous. M. Galichon considered the relationship of brother or cousin existed between them, Giulio being the eldest, and that from him Domenico derived his instruction. The commencement by the hand of Giulio, and the finish by that of Domenico, he contended, was perceptible in some of their drawings and engravings ("*Gazette des Beaux Arts*," xvii., 457), a drawing in his (M. Galichon's) possession of the figure of S. John holding the chalice, and the print of the Concert (B. 9), being quoted by him as examples.

DOMENICO CAMPAGNOLA.

A passage in the "*Anonimo*" of Morelli (11), "*Domenico Veneziano allevato da Julio Campagnola*," has been interpreted to refer to Domenico Campagnola ; the correctness of its being so is counterbalanced by the notification of his Paduan citizenship in the "*DNCVS PATVS*", used on two

occasions by Domenico Campagnola as his signature, and Zanetti, in his "Calcographie" (172), expresses the opinion that Domenico Veneziano, referred to by the "Anonimo," was the woodcutter Domenico dalle Greche, who was a pupil of Titian, and engraved in wood many of the compositions, both of Titian and of the Campagnola.

Domenico Campagnola's citizenship in Padua, during many years of his life, is established by the numerous frescoes and other works he was employed by the municipality to execute, in the public buildings of the town.

P. G. Mariette, in his "Abecedario" (i., 294), writes of him : " One thing is certain, that he was a contemporary of Titian, and that they painted in association. Campagnola had a particular talent for landscape scenery. Many of his drawings, engraved on wood, are given to Titian, and they are not unworthy of him. M. Crozat possesses a large number of pen drawings, one of them having on the back (in Italian), in the handwriting of Campagnola, this particular remark : ' In 1511 we painted in fresco, in company with Titian, in the Scola del Carmine, and with him we entered into the Scola (del Santo) of Padua, on the 24 September in the same year.' No one knew better how to draw the landscapes of Titian than Campagnola. Like the great painter, he handled the pen with much expressiveness. His foliage is light and in good taste, and his distances are marvellous for their richness. It is a common occurrence for connoisseurs to accept his drawings in mistake for those of Titian, which is the greatest praise that can be given to them. Those in the (Crozat) collection are the best that are known of the master, and amongst them are specimens of two styles, very dissimilar, the one with a dry uniform pen in Giorgione's manner of drawing, the other in the grand style of Titian."

The remains of the frescoes Domenico Campagnola was engaged in painting, in association with Titian, now much injured, consist of a series of six miracles of S. Anthony.

The correctness of the generally accepted opinion, that Titian regarded him with strong feelings of jealousy, is supported by the resemblance between their drawings, seen in the numerous examples preserved at Venice, and in the Uffizi, the Louvre, and the Dresden galleries, showing how closely Domenico Campagnola imitated the great master's style and manner.

Domenico Campagnola's principal patron was Marco Mantova Benavides, a wealthy collector and accomplished connoisseur of Padua. He employed Domenico to paint the frescoes on the walls of his palace, as mentioned by Morelli in his "Notizia" (148), and Domenico decorated the Bibliotheca Publica in fresco with colossal figures of the celebrities of history, portraits of Petrarch, and Dante represented as Sagittarius, being amongst them, which have suffered from decay and restoration. In the Museo Civico there is a fresco by Domenico, transferred to canvas, of a Decollation of S. John the Baptist, and a group of holy women surrounding the dead body of Our Saviour, dated 1540, is in the chapel of the Episcopal palace. Other frescoes are somewhat freely attributed to him in Marchi's guide to Padua. Further particulars there are none, save a quotation given by Zanetti (p. 171), from Malpez, that Domenico died at Venice in 1550 and was buried in the same tomb with Giulio Campagnola, in the cemetery of the monastery of S. Anthony at Padua.

A considerable proportion of Domenico Campagnola's engravings are dated 1517, and were executed during the time he was employed upon the public works at Padua, their inspiration being evidently due to the designs he made for the frescoes he was engaged in painting. The energetic treatment of his figures, suitable as it may have been for wall decoration, is less successful in its transfer to the restricted space of his prints. The drawing of the Madonna in the Assumption (B. xiii., 381, 4) is thus treated. The same forced action prevails in his Descent of the Holy

Spirit (B. 3) and the Decollation of a Female Saint (B. 6). Somewhat confused in its crowding, but very cleverly drawn, is the *mêlée* of the Battle of naked men in a wood (B. 10). The command Domenico Campagnola had in the use of the burin, and his appreciation of it as a means for the production of his compositions, is seen in a print of a different character, full of repose and careful drawing, of a Holy Family and Saints (B. 5), where the Madonna is represented, with much graceful dignity, holding the Infant Saviour on her knees, S. John the Baptist, S. Jerome, S. Catherine, and other Saints, being ranged at the sides. A print of S. Jerome, without date or signature, seated in a meadow bounded by a distant landscape, was recently acquired by the British Museum: it bears but slight resemblance with the animation of the master's manner, and is placed by Passavant amongst the doubtful prints (P. v., 171, 21). The Dance of twelve children (P. 16) is the most popular of Domenico Campagnola's works, in the expressiveness of life and gesture the group is drawn with: no artist has ever more happily succeeded in realizing with his pencil the vivid and graceful embodiment of the action of children, in the buoyancy of their enjoyment of the play they are engaged in.

Several large bold woodcuts are attributed to Domenico Campagnola. An amplified list of them is supplied by M. Galichon in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (xvii., 544); the five in number of Bartsch, enlarged to eight by Passavant, is increased to seventeen, the last three being designated as doubtful; twelve are described as bearing the artist's signature, and three as dated 1517. The most important is the series illustrative of the Infancy of Our Saviour, comprising the Procession, and the Adoration, of the Magi, and the Murder of the Innocents. Impressions of them, with the exception of the first, of the Procession of the Magi, are in the British Museum. The Murder of the Innocents is printed on two sheets, and inscribed:

“DOMINICVS . CAMPAGNOLA . M . D . XVII .” “IN . VENETIA . IL . VIECERI.” Another print of the Preaching of S. John (P. v., 172, 5), of which an impression is likewise in the British Museum, bears the signature of Nicolaus Boldrini, “Nich° B. V. T.,” by whom many of the Venetian woodcuts of the time were engraved.

The taste was then prevalent in Venice for these products of the woodcutters, which were engraved in considerable numbers from the painters' drawings. Some of them, from the compositions of Titian, retain, in their rough free cutting, a resemblance with his vigorous manner, and have consequently been attributed to him. Vasari merely states that Titian caused to be published some large woodcuts from his drawings. The most important, although extremely rude of execution, is the series in twelve sheets of the Passage of the Red Sea (P. vi., 215), of later workmanship, engraved, as the inscription tells us, by Domenico dalle Greche.

GIROLAMO CAMPAGNOLA.

Two rare prints have been classified from the mark “I . I . CA” upon them, under the name of Campagnola (P. v., 160). The first, of a Nativity (B. xiii., 370, 1), is placed by Bartsch at the commencement of his list of Giulio Campagnola's engravings: the Madonna with the Infant Saviour is seated in front of some buildings on the left, the ox and the ass, and two shepherds approaching, being in the background. The second, bearing a somewhat similar mark, described as S. Ottilia (B. xv., 539; P. v., 162, 2) engraved by the same hand as the Nativity, is a gracefully-drawn full-length figure of a female saint looking forward, holding two eyes on a pointed piece of metal in her extended left hand: she stands in a low-lying landscape, where the sea is in the distance, the space above, at the back, being blank, throwing out the figure in bold relief.

The two prints, from the interpretation given to the letters upon them, have been attributed to Girolamo Campagnola, supported by the mention made of him by Vasari, as a painter of Padua, and a pupil of Squarcione. Ottley (767), considered the mark I. I. CA. upon the print of the Nativity should perhaps be read as "Hieronymus Campagnola," adding that "the style is such as might be expected from a scholar of Squarcione." In their depth of colour and broadness of manner the two prints differ materially from the treatment of either of the Campagnola, and are far more in resemblance with the work of Benedeto Montagna, or some other Northern painter.

Amongst the few anonymous engravings, in correspondence with the prints of Giulio Campagnola, is a small undescribed print, in the writer's possession, of which there is a reproduction in the British Museum, of Mars, Venus, and Cupid under a tree in a landscape, with a fortified town in the distance, inscribed with the letter "L" at the foot: it is cleverly executed, with an evident Venetian influence in the composition.

MARTINO DA UDINE (PELLEGRINO).

An extended use of the dotted process, but with far less refinement than in the engravings of Giulio Campagnola, is seen in the late states of some rare and very beautiful specimens of early Italian workmanship, signed with the monogram of a double PP. From the delicate thinness of the lines of their cutting, it has been considered they were engraved on silver plates. The most interesting illustration of the artist's manner is a representation of a Lion Hunt (B. xiii., 356, 1), remarkable for the clearness and animation wherewith the various incidents of the crowded scene are delineated, in the small space they are comprised in. A larger plate, called by Bartsch *La Puissance de l'Amour*

(B. xiii., 357, 2), is equally fine in its cutting, and exceptional in its excellence, as an example of the clever transparency of effect the engraver's art was capable of producing upon the metal. Impressions from both plates, in their extremely rare first state, are in the British Museum. No example of the print of the Descent from the Cross (P. v., 142, 2), in the same early state, although referred to by M. Harzen, appears to be known: the impression in the British Museum is covered throughout with close punctured dots, the same as the second state of *La Puissance de l'Amour*, occasioning the architectural and other details to be almost obliterated, through the heavy shadow introduced. The inartistic manner, with scarcely any observance of variation of tone, wherewith this added work was executed, creates the supposition, that the worn plates must have passed into the hands of some later engraver, by whom the additions were made. Bartsch, in his account of *La Puissance de l'Amour*, expressed such an opinion, which was concurred in by Ottley, who illustrated the text of his description of the print with a fac-simile of a portion of an impression in its stippled state.

The prints are attributed by Passavant, in his "*Peintre-Graveur*" (v., 140), to the Friulian painter Martino da Udine, surnamed Pellegrino. Passavant's information was derived from an account of the master and his works, in the "*Deutsches Kuntsblatt*" for 1853, contributed by M. Harzen, whose interest in the subject had been stimulated by the possession of an impression of *La Puissance de l'Amour*, in the first state, accompanied by a pen drawing of the composition, on which was written "*trionfo della luna*." The subject, which defies any attempt at explanation, was interpreted by M. Harzen to have originated in the influence the ancients considered was exercised over men's actions by the moon: the date he placed at about 1500. The drawing, and the accompanying print, from which M. Harzen's descriptions were taken, are now in the

Museum at Hamburg, having been acquired by bequest under that gentleman's will.

In the second volume of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's "History of Painting in North Italy," there is a chapter on the artists of Friuli, with a long account of Pellegrino, and descriptions of his paintings, especially of the decoration of the church of S. Antonio, in his native place of San Daniele. His father, Giovanni Battista, was settled at Udine in 1468 as a painter: in 1470 he was at the neighbouring village of San Daniele, near Udine, when his son Martino was born. The designation "Pellegrino," by which the son became known, cannot be interpreted in the sense ascribed to it, that he was a stranger or pilgrim in a village in such close proximity to his father's home at Udine: the flattering epithet was said to have been bestowed upon him, in 1494, by Giovanni Bellini, from whom, and from Cima da Conegliano, his early studies received their direction.

Driven from Friuli by the repeated invasions of the Turks, Pellegrino settled at Ferrara, where, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, he painted some frescoes of mythological subjects for Duke Alphonso, and during many successive years he was at intervals in residence there for lengthened periods in the duke's employ, at the time when the Court of Ferrara was one of the most critical in Europe in all matters of art.

In 1512 he had been enabled to return to Udine, where he designed sundry allegories in the *loggie* of the Town Palace, and was occupied in the decoration of the cathedral. The rest of his life was passed in the district of Friuli, and he died on the 23rd December, 1547. In the National Gallery in London there is a picture, deemed to be by Pellegrino, of a Madonna and Child, with SS. James and Fortunatus in attendance: in the Venice Accademia an Annunciation is inscribed "Pelegrinus faciebat 1519. P. P. M. Domini Suchonici camerarii auspiciis Francisco Tascha priore."

Signor Morelli, in his "Italian Masters in German Galleries" (8vo, 1883), expresses a far less flattering estimate of Pellegrino (p. 18), considering him to be but a second-rate artist, adding that "when Harzen perceived the two P.'s on the large Annunciation of the Venetian Pinacothec, signed 'Pelegrinus faciebat 1519—P—P.', he exclaimed with a joyful heart, 'eureka!', and without examining, whether the drawing and style of this painted work corresponded with that of the two celebrated engravings, likewise signed with two P.'s, he ascribed them without hesitation to Pellegrino da S. Daniele. Then, as often happens, he was followed blindly by the learned Passavant. But whoever compares, *e.g.*, the wonderful engraving 'Triumph of Selene' (La Puissance de l'Amour) with the well-known paintings of Pellegrino, will share my opinion, namely, that the engraving is very likely by an eminent Ferrarese artist, but has nothing whatever to do with the manner of Pellegrino."

Martino da Udine was admittedly held in considerable repute in his own district. Signor Morelli quotes a contract of the 5th April, 1494, inscribed on a picture at Osopo (which is still to be seen), wherein he is called "Maestro Martino, dicto Pellegrino da Udine."

The figures on the pedestals in La Puissance de l'Amour are stated to resemble the representations of statues, introduced by Pellegrino at the angles and other divisions of the frescoes he painted in the church of S. Antonio in San Daniele; where, according to Passavant, in his description of the artist's print of S. Christopher, he also painted a figure of the saint, somewhat varied in composition from the print. Signor Morelli's acquaintance with Pellegrino's various paintings, founded on their personal study and examination, has to be considered in arriving at an opinion respecting the prints.

The marvellous distinctness and refinement of these prints, as seen in the impressions from the plates in their

original condition, before the stippled shadows were introduced, bespeak a hand thoroughly skilled in metal chasing, for which the artificers of Friuli had for centuries been especially distinguished. From the archives of Udine we derive confirmatory evidence that the goldsmith's art, as well as that of painting, was pursued by Pellegrino, a contract being there registered, dated 18th May, 1491, from which we learn that he had become the partner of a goldsmith of San Daniele : the contract lends considerable support to the correctness of M. Harzen's judgment, that these delicate specimens of metal chasing, attributed to Pellegrino, are of his workmanship.

MARCELLO FOGOLINO.

Another Friulian artist Marcello Fogolino, adopted the manner of Giulio Campagnola in the few plates he engraved : the shading of them is in a lighter tone, the backgrounds being stippled in careful uniform order : Bartsch (B. xiii., 212) only mentions his name, not having seen any of the prints described by Zani and Passavant (P. v., 145).

The two prints at the commencement of Passavant's list are analogous in character : the first (P. 1), signed "MARCELLO FOGOLINO", represents the Nativity amidst massive ruins; the Madonna with the Infant Saviour is on the left, and in the courtyard at the back, on the right, S. Joseph is at the well, with his hands upraised, hoisting the well-rope ; the scene is very artistically treated : the second print (P. 2), of the Presentation of the Madonna, unsigned, but agreeing in style with that of the Nativity, is more full of incident ; six venerable-looking men are gathered on an upper terrace, a seventh being on the steps in front of it, meeting the young Madonna, who ascends them. A third print, of a naked woman sitting with a child (P. 3), signed in full "MARCELLO FOGOLINO", brings us more distinctly into acquaintance with the peculiarity of his style from its being

stippled throughout, and the drawing has much similarity with that we have the knowledge of in his pictures.

The two prints signed by the artist, with descriptions of which Passavant concludes his list, are copied from antique statues. A small one undescribed, of a lad with a ram, slight and careless in its cutting, having no stippling introduced, but identical in some respects with the prints before named, has been placed, on account of the inscription of the letters "M.F", amongst the artist's engravings in the British Museum. The most important addition made to them, in the national collection, is of the Beheading of S. John the Baptist, not mentioned by Bartsch or Passavant, which by the late M. Galichon (*"Gazette des Beaux Arts,"* xviii., 546) was ascribed to the Milanese painter, Cesare da Sesto. The decision arrived at respecting it is due to the pencil-like incision of the fine lines it is cut with, the same in treatment as in the two prints by Fogolino we have first described, and the stippled work introduced, along the brow of the rising ground, and in other parts of the landscape, lends support to the opinion which has been entertained, that the workmanship is in correspondence with that of Fogolino.

There was a family of the name at Udine, and a member of it Marcello Fogolino is supposed to have been. He was employed in the decoration of the cathedral at Trent, and several of the frescoes in the episcopal palace, the Castello di Buon Consiglio, are attributed to him. In the Berlin Museum there is an altar-piece of the Madonna and Child, with attendant Saints, bearing his signature. Important works by his hand are at Vicenza; he painted a Madonna and Child in a glory of angels, with a view of the city at the foot, for the church of La Santa Corona; Fogolino's largest and most interesting picture, of an Adoration of the Magi, is now in the Pinacoteca of the city; he has represented himself amongst the attendants, standing by a horse's head, with his hand on the bridle, whereon is inscribed "MARCELLVS FOGOLINVS . P. P." The two P.'s are the initials,

most probably, of Pictor Pordenonensis, as Pordenone was considered to have been his birthplace. In the church of San Marco are some of his paintings; and we learn he was resident there in 1533, from the record in the municipal archives of his purchasing, in conjunction with his brother, some land in the city in that year, which is the last known record respecting him.





CHAPTER XVIII.

JACOBO DE' BARBARI.

JACOBO DE' BARBARI, described by Bartsch and the writers preceding him as the Master of the caduceus, from the mark of a caduceus on his prints, with varied attribution of the country he belonged to, was classified by Bartsch amongst the German engravers (B. vii., 516). By Passavant, whose information was derived from the particulars published by M. Harzen, in Naumann's "Archiv" (Leipsic, 1855, i., p. 210), he is called Jacob Walsch, painter and engraver of Nuremberg (P. iii., 134), who in his youth had passed much of his time at Venice. M. Harzen puts this interpretation upon the extracts he makes from Morelli's "Notizia," where the "Anonimo" (77) entitles him "Iacomo de Barberino Veneziano".

Dr. Lippmann, in his "Italienische Holzschnitt," discusses very fully the question as to the nationality of "Jacob Walch," and from the circumstance of there having been in Venice a German printer (p. 80), who inscribed his name "Georg Walch" at the end of a book, printed by him between 1479 and 1482, he infers that Jacobus Walch must have been a member of the same family. The only other quotation he gives of the name, is of a painter, "N. Walch," who in 1442 was employed in painting the town hall of Nuremberg.

Beyond the above mention of the printer George Walch at Venice, there is no apparent evidence in support of the amplification, into the artist's name, of the appellation "Walsch," by which the German writers designated Jacobo de' Barbari, or of his supposed German parentage; we find, on the contrary, that at the commencement of the sixteenth century he was regarded in Germany as of Italian nationality, and as a member of the Barbari family. Prior to 1503 a representation of Our Saviour in half figure, in the gallery at Weimar, was painted by him. A woodcut engraving was made, evidently from the Weimar picture, by Lucas Cranach the younger (P. iv., 25, 1), representing Our Saviour, in half figure faced to the front, with long full beard parted in the centre, and curling hair falling over His shoulders; the Saviour holds a small cross in His left hand, and the right hand is upraised in the attitude of benediction. The date, 1553, with the Cranach crest of the imperial dragon, is by the side of the face, on the left, and a descriptive account is in the margin at the foot:—
 "Effigies Salvatoris nostri Iesv Christi, ante L. annos picta a praestantissimo artifice Iacobo de Barbaris Italo, & recens de exemplo illo fœliciter expressa Vuitebergæ, Anno 1553." Beneath is added the well-known account of Our Saviour, in Greek and Latin, in collateral columns.¹ Passavant, quoting

¹ The following is the Latin version:—*"Figura corporis Domini Nostri Iesu Christi ex Nicephoro. Phil. Melan. Nicephorvs Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanæ minister, scriptor historiæ Ecclesiastice, & maximarum rerum, quas gesserunt Imperatores, qui Constantinopolin tenuerunt, & bellorum Turcicorum in Asia, figuram Domini nostri Iesu Christi describit in fine libri primi his uerbis ex Græca narratione fideliter conuersis.*

"Vt ex antiquis descriptionibus accepimus, figura Christi talis fuit. Formosa species corporis fuit. Statura septem integras spithamas excessit, Capillum habuit nonnihil flavescentem, non densum, & in extrema parte aliquantulum crispum, nigra supercilia non multum curua, nec sine intervallo. Oculos fuluos qui nominantur Charopi, non lusciosos, nulla deformitate insignes, non uagabundos, naso recto, barba flaua non prolixa. Capilli uero capitis prolixi fuerunt, quia nunquam Nouacula, aut ullius hominis manu tonsi fuerunt. Collum leniter inflexum fuit, ne prorsus

from Heller (821), describes the print, of which there is an impression in the British Museum, but fails to notice the inscription with the mention of the Italian artist, by whom the picture had been painted. The picture, which is in the gallery at Weimar, is on a dark ground, with the signature "I. A . D. B.", and the caduceus between the letters: it belonged to Paul de Praun, and is noticed by Von Murr in his description of Nuremberg in 1778 (S. 471).

To the researches made respecting the life and works of Albert Dürer, we are indebted for much of the knowledge we have become acquainted with, relating to his friend and instructor Jacobo de' Barbari, which afford confirmatory proof of his having been a native of Venice, born there about 1450, and that he acquired his art education under the influence of the Bellini.

Early in the last decade of the fifteenth century Jacobo de' Barbari was resident in Nuremberg, occupied in the production and publication of his engravings. Albert Dürer had returned home from his "wanderjahre" in the Spring of 1494, and on the 14th July of that year married Agnes, the daughter of Hans Frey, and commenced his professional career in Nuremberg, acquiring, from his association with Jacobo de' Barbari, material instruction, not only in drawing, but in the technical use of the burin, as we learn from the copies and adaptations made by him in his engravings, from those of his Italian acquaintance. Albert Dürer gives us information of the time of his intimacy with Jacobo de' Barbari in the letter he wrote on the 7th February, 1506, from Venice to Bilibald Pirkheimer: "What formerly I was so well pleased with, eleven years ago, pleases me no longer,

erectus incederet. Color faciei subfuscus, tritico similis, facies non rotunda, sed qualis fuit matris aliquantulum demissa, paululum rubescens, & uultus ipse significabat hominem intelligentem, & mores graues, & placidos, & prorsus ab iracundia alienos. Prorsus autem similis erat purissimæ matri suæ."

and if I had not myself seen it, I should have believed it from no one else. Let me tell you that here are many painters, more excellent than Master Jacob; but Antony Kolb swears there lives not on earth a better painter than Jacob." The allusion clearly refers back to Albert Dürer's admiration of the Venetian painter "eleven years ago," when they both were living at Nuremberg; and that had not his visit to Venice given him the opportunity of seeing with his own eyes the works of other Italian painters, he could not have believed there were artists superior to Jacobo de' Barbari.

Still further evidence of Albert Dürer's intercourse with Jacobo de' Barbari, in his early days, is derived from the preface to his book on the "Proportions of the Human Body," where he writes: "Many people might blame me, who am so ignorant, for having undertaken a work of this nature, and they would not be far wrong. As for myself I should much have preferred attending to one eminent and learned in these matters, than to treat of it myself, not having the requisite knowledge. But I have never met with anyone who had written upon the subject of the measurement of the human body, except an author of the name of Jacobus, born in Venice, a gracious painter. He showed me a man and a woman drawn to scale, at a time when to behold an unknown kingdom was to me of far less interest, than to learn his theories. Had I been acquainted with them, I would have seen to their being printed in his honor for the general good; but I was then very young, and I had never heard of such things. As, however, art has always been so dear to me, I formed the resolution to arrive at a similar result. The said Jacobus, I easily perceived, was unwilling to make his system clear to me; so I placed my own drawings before me, and applied myself to read Vitruvius, who has written a little upon the proportions of the human body; and from these two authors therefore I took my point of departure, and in pursuit of my project I from day to day carried on my researches."

The passage is taken from the unpublished preface in the MS. of his treatise upon the proportions of the human body, in Dürer's handwriting, in the British Museum, and was first printed by Dr. Albert von Zahn in his "*Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft*" for 1868 : through some unexplainable reason it was omitted from the preface in the publication of the volume, which was not made until after the author's death. Many of the drawings by Dürer for the work are extant, which give us a clue to the period when he was engaged upon it : in the British Museum there is a drawing of a figure of a woman, in geometrical divisions, one of the studies for the book, accompanied by a folio leaf with forty-four lines of explanation, in Dürer's handwriting, dated 1500.

Jacobo de' Barbari's engravings were, for the most part, executed and published at Nuremberg, during this the period of his connection with Albert Dürer, prior to his going back to Venice in 1497 ; the watermarks of the paper the engravings are printed on are frequently the same as those upon the paper used by Albert Dürer. Their assumed publication at this period is corroborated by the free use the German engraver made of his friend's productions, evidently with his sanction, and under his guidance and direction : upon comparing the Adam and Eve (B. vii., 1) of Albert Dürer, dated 1504, with the Mars and Venus (B. vii., 20), and the Apollo and Diana (B. vii., 16), of Jacobo de' Barbari, we recognize the models of the figure of Adam, the legs, almost line for line, with their faults of anatomical drawing, being copied from them ; whilst the figure of Eve was adapted from other engravings of the Venetian artist : it corresponds in the entire detail, especially in the bend of the knee, and the position of both the arms, with the figure of Eurydice in the bronze plaque, of doubtful authenticity, belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus, attributed to Jacobo de' Barbari by M. Ephrussi, who illustrated with an engraving the description he gave of it in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" for 1876 (vol. xiii., 2nd period, 3661).

The occasion for Jacobo de' Barbari's leaving Nuremberg was to carry out a commission he had received from his friend and patron Antony Kolb, one of the leading German merchants resident in Venice, to make and engrave upon wood a bird's-eye view of the city. It is the most important, and by far the largest work of the kind, which, up to the period of its publication, had been attempted, the incentive for it being evidently the woodcut plan of Florence, similar in its treatment, executed some few years previously, of which there is an impression in the Imperial collection at Berlin. This view of Venice was engraved upon six blocks, which are still preserved in the Museum Correr; the distinctness wherewith each building is drawn, and the correctness of perspective observed throughout the whole composition, invest it with great interest as a specimen of artistic engraving.

Antony Kolb, in his petition to the Seignior for the exclusive privilege of the sale of the prints, states that three years had been devoted to the completion of the work; the date on the print is 1500, so that early in 1497 Jacobo de' Barbari must have returned to Venice.

We have scarcely any materials to guide us as to Jacobo de' Barbari's engagements during the few years following the publication of his plan of Venice, until he entered the service of Count Philip of Burgundy. Amongst the contemporary notices we are dependent upon for particulars respecting his subsequent career there is, in one of Leonardo da Vinci's MSS. in the British Museum, the following entry: "On Saturday morning the 3rd of August 1504 the German Jacobo came to my house to stay; we have settled that I am to pay him one carline a day." The entry raises the question, whether in 1504 Jacobo de' Barbari visited Florence, and was in the employment of Leonardo da Vinci. It was the time when Leonardo was in full occupation, making his preparations for proceeding with the painting of his fresco in the Palazzo della Signoria,

and no more valuable assistant than Jacobo de' Barbari to aid him in the work could have been met with.

Early in the century Count Philip, the natural son of the Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, by Margaret von der Post, had been sent by the Emperor Maximilian on an embassy to Pope Julius II. The Emperor made him commander of Gravelines, and admiral and keeper of the towns captured in Guelderland : the Count, on his return in 1504-5 from Rome, retired to his possessions in Zealand. He was celebrated for his accomplishments and his taste in all matters of art, and was on terms of intimacy with Erasmus, and the literary society of his time ; on his journey homeward through Italy, he probably became acquainted with, and engaged Jacobo de' Barbari to paint the frescoes on the walls of his chateau of Zuytborch, where for a considerable time he was at work upon its decoration ; prior to the count's appointment to the bishopric of Utrecht, which was not made until 1516, Jacobo de' Barbari had left his service, and consequently he had no share, as alleged, in the alterations and embellishment of the Episcopal Palace. In the Life of the Bishop in Freherus, "*Rerum Germanicarum Scriptores*" (iii., p. 187), our artist is called "*Jacopus Barbarus Venetus.*"

The latter part of Jacobo de' Barbari's life was passed at the Court of the Grand Duchess Marguerite, the daughter of the Emperor Maximilian. Her second husband had died in 1504 : on the death of her brother Philip at Burgos in 1506, she was appointed Regent of the Netherlands. Amongst the accounts of her treasurer, Diego Flores, there is a receipt in Italian, signed "*Jacobus de' Barbaris,*" marked with the caduceus, dated 1510, and the further notice of a payment to him of 76 livres to buy a *pourpoint* of velvet ; and on the 1st March in the following year the grant of an annuity of 100 livres is mentioned, in consideration of the good and continued services of our well-beloved painter, Jacobo de' Barbari, on account of his debility

and old age. From the expression made use of in this grant respecting Jacobo de' Barbari's age, his birth it is to be assumed occurred some short time prior to 1450.

The last notices on record respecting Jacobo de' Barbari are in the inventories of the effects of the Grand Duchess, and in Albert Dürer's diary of his visit to the Netherlands in 1520-1. In the first, under the date of 1515, there is an entry of twenty-three coppers of "mysteries," in condition for printing from upon paper, by the deceased artist, Jacobo de' Barbari, from which it would appear that he had died in or previous to that year; and Albert Dürer writes, in 1521, in his diary, of his having visited the duchess at Malines, who showed him her art possessions, amongst them some fine things by Jean van Eyck and Jacobo de' Barbari. He asked the duchess to give him a book of drawings by Jacobo, but she told him she had already promised it to his successor (Bernard von Orley).

The most authentic pictures by Jacobo de' Barbari are the half-length figure of Our Saviour in the gallery at Weimar, previously referred to in the account of Lucas Cranach the younger's engraving from it, painted, as the inscription on the engraving tells us, prior to 1503; and a small picture in the town gallery of Augsburg of a brace of partridges and a pair of gauntlets suspended against a panel, with the signature, "Jac. de Barbari P. 1504."

M. Galichon, in his memoir of the artist, in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" for 1861 (vol. xi., 311), refers to a picture belonging to an amateur at Ratisbon, representing an old man in conversation with a young girl, signed "IA DA BARBARI MDIII:" and to another, in his own possession, on fine canvas, of which he gives an engraving, of the Madonna, with SS. Antony and John in attendance, signed "IA. FF.", the caduceus being between the letters. He mentions also pictures of SS. Catherine (No. 1795), and Barbara (No. 1796), ascribed to Jacobo de' Barbari, in the gallery at Dresden, and the before-named painting of Our Saviour at Weimar.

Signor Morelli, in his "Italian Masters in German Galleries," 1883, enumerates several pictures, considered by him to be by Jacobo de' Barbari, besides those named by M. Galichon. Amongst them a Christ in Dr. Lippmann's possession at Berlin, and in the Dresden Gallery two pictures of a Christ Blessing (No. 1875, formerly ascribed to Lucas van Leyden), and a Galatea standing on a Dolphin (No. 27), attributed, with a query, to Sandro Botticelli. Also a male portrait in the Belvedere at Vienna, designated in the catalogue (Room 4, No. 36) as of the old Florentine school, but which the late Otto Mündler had recognized as being by the hand of Jacobo de' Barbari; and another bust portrait of a young man in Venetian costume in the Town Gallery of Bergamo. Signor Morelli adds to his list the frescoes of two armed warriors, bearing the stamp of the Bellini school, upon the monument of Agostino Onigo, in the church of San Niccolo at Treviso, the arabesques on the front of a house in the Piazza della Cattedrale in the same city, and the frescoes on the tomb of Melchior Trevisani, in the church of S. Maria Gloriosa de' Frari at Venice.

Jacobo de' Barbari's engravings, from the originality in the style of their cutting, were evidently executed by the artist who designed them; they have much of the character of goldsmiths' workmanship, in the careful and timid precision they are chased with, and the thin lines of their shading soon became exhausted in the printing. The range of their subject is but limited, and the few groups he attempted the composition of are the least successful of his productions, from the mannered restraint of their arrangement, and the disregard of the relative distances of the figures. In his single figures we have the best illustration of his talent: the most artistic examples are Judith with the head of Holofernes (B. vii., 517, 1), Our Saviour holding the banner of the Cross (B. 3), S. Catherine with the emblems of her martyrdom (B. 8), a young woman looking at herself in a

mirror (B. 12), and, especially distinguished amongst them, in the minuteness of its finish, the representation of S. Sebastian tied to a tree (P. iii., 140, 27), seen to below the knees, looking forward with an expression of suffering resignation at the death he is about to undergo, for the arrows have not yet pierced his flesh. The Saint is delineated with careful correctness, evidently modelled from the life. Jacobo de' Barbari's faults of drawing from the undraped figure show that his opportunities of study from the nude had been but limited. Attributable to the same period are his prints of Victory (B. 23) and Victory and Fame (B. 18), and three naked men tied to a tree (B. 17), all of them very spirited in their execution. In the group of Apollo and Diana (B. 16), where Apollo stands on the left, shooting an arrow from his bow, the drawing, and the pose of the figure, are the same as in the figure of Mars, in the print of Mars and Venus (B. 20).

His engravings of Holy Families (B. 4, 5), a third having been added by Passavant (P. 26), are thoroughly Italian in sentiment, characteristic of the teaching Jacobo de' Barbari in his youth received in the schools of Venice: the first in Bartsch's list, with its enclosed garden, recalls the words of the Song of Solomon, which apparently prompted the composition. Another specimen of his Venetian manner is an Adoration of the Magi (B. 2), peculiar in its treatment, with the unusual adjunct of an attendant upon one of the Magi, carrying in his hand a lighted torch. In the list of his sacred subjects is to be noticed a small graceful print, called by Bartsch a woman with a distaff (B. 10), intended, probably, to represent Eve with her son Abel in her arms.

M. Galichon describes Jacobo de' Barbari as eminently Pagan in sentiment, and that he had no feeling for the illustration of sacred history. One of the largest of his prints is the representation of the offering of a child at a statue of Priapus (B. 19), with numerous figures in attendance on the

central group; in the passive expression of the women's faces, we see that it is copied from an antique bas-relief.

The group of Mars and Venus (B. 20), is worked in such extremely fine lines, that impressions retaining the delicate gradations of shadow are of rare occurrence. A more important example than any hitherto ascribed to the master, is the bust portrait, nearly life size, of a young woman, catalogued by Bartsch (xiii., 103, 3) amongst the early anonymous Italian engravers, and ascribed by Passavant (v., 225, 15) to Jacopo Francia, but which has been transferred, in the British Museum collection, to Jacobo de' Barbari. The peculiar arrangement of the hair in plaited bands and curls of studied negligence, falling by the side of the face, and the mannered inclination of the head and neck, characteristic of Jacobo de' Barbari's drawing, correspond with similar treatment in many of his female figures. A print by the unknown master, H^{EE}, called by Bartsch, *Le Parnasse profane* (B. xv., 463, 4), is evidently engraved from a design of Jacobo de' Barbari; some of the figures are treated exactly in his manner, and in the upper right corner Pegasus, surrounded by a flight of ravens, rushes through the air; impressions, in the first, and in a later state, are in the British Museum.

We have not, amongst Jacobo de' Barbari's copper-plate engravings, any panels of ornament or similar compositions, connected with the numerous decorative works we know he was for a considerable time engaged in painting. Besides the large plan of Venice, there are two rare woodcuts, of which impressions are in the British Museum and the Albertina at Vienna. Signor Morelli (145) mentions other impressions of them in the Malaspina collection. They are described by Passavant (iii., 141, 31-32) as "*Combat entre des hommes et des Satyres*," engraved on one block—and "*Triomphe d'hommes nus contre des Satyres*," engraved on three blocks. The account given by Passavant of these woodcuts is very incorrect, written,

evidently, from his notes, some time subsequent to a hasty inspection of the prints. The treatment of the naked figures, especially of the women, with the peculiar faults of drawing, and the absence of articulation in the shoulders, and other points of resemblance, identify them as being by the hand of Jacobo de' Barbari; there is no mark upon them of the caduceus, as stated by Passavant, but in the first division of the second series, the ornaments at the top of the long poles, carried by two men, are formed as a caduceus; a detailed account of the prints is given in the British Museum catalogue. The story, probably, is derived from some legendary tale or early romance of chivalry; upon a square standard in both series the letters "Q. R. F. E. V." are inscribed. Passavant's amplification of these letters into "Quod recte faciendum esse videtur" is an ingenious surmise, but the moral conveyed by the reading given to the letters does not help us to an understanding of the subject, to which the artist gave us no clue, beyond the inscription "VIRTUS EXCELSA CVPIDINEM ERE REGNANTEM DOMAT," upon another square standard, borne by two men in the second division of the second series, and the inscription, "D. FATIDICE" on the pediment of the temple, on the left, to which the procession advances.

The prints have the appearance of being copied from designs for wall decoration; and in the clever treatment of their crowded groups of naked figures, they may be engravings of the compositions of some of the frescoes Jacobo de' Barbari painted on the walls of Count Philip of Burgundy's château at Zuytborch.

In the account by Dr. Lippmann, in his "Italienische Holzschnitt" (pp. 63-85), of the woodcuts which emanated from Venice, during the years 1490-1500, he advances the theory that Jacobo de' Barbari was one of the principal engravers employed in the *bottega* of the printer Giovanni Andrea Valvassore, in association with Jacobus of Strasbourg; and that the mark **la**, which is found on many of

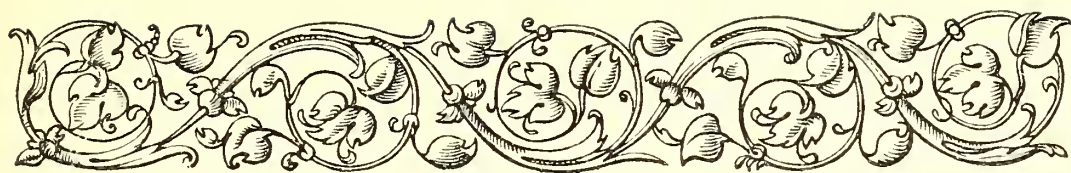
the book illustrations, issued in Venice at the end of the fifteenth, and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, representing the first two letters of the Christian name, *Jacobus*, of the two engravers, was the signature they each adopted, the distinctive character of their workmanship being easily discernible. Dr. Lippmann, moreover, regards the illustrations of the *Hypnerotomachia*, and the cuts distinguished by the minuscule *b* in the Mallermi Bible of 1490, as attributable to Jacobo de' Barbari, his judgment being based upon the similarity of their character with the large woodcuts (P. iii., 141), catalogued by Passavant as by the hand of Jacobo de' Barbari, inferior although Dr. Lippmann pronounces them to be to the cuts of the *Hypnerotomachia*: the artistic influence discernible in the cuts of the *Hypnerotomachia* he ascribes to Bellini (79), sustained by the small *b* upon two of them, the mark, in his estimation, of the inventor and not of the engraver.

Some particulars respecting Jacobo de' Barbari are set out in the memoir contributed by the late M. Galichon to the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* previously mentioned, accompanied by a *catalogue raisonné* of his engravings, and an account of the few pictures, original and attributed, he was acquainted with. The discussion was continued by M. Ephrussi in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* for 1876 (vol. xiii., 2nd period, p. 363), in opposition to many of the views entertained by M. Galichon, supplemented by a further contribution of "Quelques Remarques à-propos de l'influence Italienne dans une œuvre de Dürer" to the *Gazette* for 1878 (vol. xvii., 2nd period, p. 444), illustrated by fac-similes, showing the free use made by Albert Dürer of the works of certain of the early Italian engravers. In a series of articles in the *Gazette*, subsequently collected in a volume, entitled "*Albert Dürer et ses Dessins*" (8vo, Paris, 1882), M. Ephrussi further investigated the subject, and supplied several reproductions of Albert Dürer's copies and adaptations from the engravings of Jacobo de' Barbari.

Dr. Thausing, in his "Life of Albert Dürer" (English translation, 1882, i., 283), devoted a chapter to Dürer's rivalry with Jacobo de' Barbari.¹

¹ In 1881 a volume was published, "Jacob de Barbari et Albert Durer. La vie et l'œuvre du Maître au caducée, ses élèves Dürer, Titien, Marcantonio, Mabuse, &c.," par Le Comte A. E. de Canditto. 8vo, Bruxelles, Van Trigt. The author interweaves the few facts that are known into a fictitious narrative of the life of Jacobo de' Barbari and his family connections, Lucas van Leyden being designated as his cousin, and he states that Jacobo de' Barbari was a Belgian, his family being Jews, natives of the city of Liege, and that his parents having gone to Venice, he there was born about 1470; that Titian, Marcantonio Raimondi, Mabuse, and Albert Dürer were his pupils, any talent the latter was possessed of having emanated from Jacobo de' Barbari's teaching. He concludes his account with a story of Jacobo de' Barbari's intimate relations with the Grand Duchess, which, like a large proportion of the statements in the volume, is totally erroneous and unauthenticated.






CHAPTER XIX.

ITALIAN BOOKS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

 HE discovery made by the goldsmiths of the new employment their craft was applicable to, had, as we have narrated, been rapidly improved upon by the artists of Florence. Some few years however passed away before its utilization was brought into operation in the great city of the Adriatic. The Republic was at the climax of its power in Europe, and all the pursuits of culture were earnestly encouraged in the latter part of the fifteenth century; but we search in vain for examples of the exercise of the art of engraving by the hands of the Venetian painters. The knowledge of the practice of metal-chasing for the purpose of taking imprints upon paper, by the artists of North Italy, dates its origin from Andrea Mantegna's visit to Florence in 1466, which resulted in the important development speedily carried out, on his return to Mantua, of the technical skill he took back with him.

The piracy of the prints of Mantegna, which made manifest the risk the painter incurred in availing himself of the new process, of placing at the command of others the power of copying and selling fac-similes of his work, exerted apparently a deterrent effect upon its adoption in Venice. With the exception of the engravings of Jacobo de' Barbari, some of which probably were engraved in Venice, and the drawings of Giorgione reproduced upon the copper by

Giulio and Domenico Campagnola, and the woodcuts attributed to Domenico Campagnola, and those of Jacobus of Strasburg, followed by the woodcuts of Nicolaus Boldrinus, Domenico dalle Greche, and their imitators and successors, and the works of Ugo da Carpi and the numerous *chiar'-oscuro* engravers, executed for the most part at Venice during the first half of the sixteenth century,¹ we have no cognizance of the pursuit of engraving in the city, or that the Bellini, or Giorgione, or Titian, or any of the painters contemporary with them, essayed with their own hands to take advantage of the new method for the perpetuation of their drawings upon copper-plates, or that they interested themselves in superintending the engraving by others of their compositions. The literature, however, of the time abounds with evidence of the influence of their teaching; and the reflex of the taste they created is seen in the emulation of their manner, in the works of the young artists congregated in the city in search of employment, who devoted the art-knowledge they had been trained in, to supply the different printers with engraved illustrations to the publications of the day, for which so great a demand arose, at the end of the fifteenth century.

Some slight retrospect is essential, to understand the progress that was made in engraving, in its application as an adjunct to the printing-press, prior to the use of it, which was brought into such extensive practice in Venice.

The earliest known book in Italy, with illustrations in its pages, was printed at Rome in 1467. “*Meditatōnes Reverēdissimi patris dñi Johannis de turrecremata Sacros̄cē Romane eccl'ie Cardinalis posite ⁊ depicti de ipsius mādato ī eccl'ie*² *ambitu scē marie de Minerva Rome—Finite sunt*

¹ See Passavant (i., 126-153).

² The frescoes Cardinal Johannes de Turrecremata, the author of the “*Meditationes*,” ordered for the cloisters of the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, were erroneously stated to have been painted by Fra Angelico da Fiesole; there is no other foundation for the statement, than the circum-

contemplationes supradicte ⁊ continue Rome p̄ ulricum han. Anno domini millesimo quádringentesimo sexagesimo septimo die ultima Mensis decembris. I. R." Three copies only of the book are known,—in the public libraries of Nuremberg and Vienna, and in Earl Spencer's library in England (Bibl. Spenc., vi., 273). It is a small folio, in Gothic type, the woodcuts comprised in it being similar in design to those in the early xylographic books. Dibdin, in his *Bibliographical Decameron* (i., 387), writes that they were most probably executed by Ulric Hahn (the printer) himself, or by some German artist under his direction. A second edition, without name or place, was printed five years later, in 1472, illustrated apparently with impressions from the same blocks (Bibl. Spenc., iv., 35).

Ulric Hahn (Udalricus Gallus, according to the Latinized reading of his name he sometimes adopted in Italy) was born at Ingoldstadt, and called himself a citizen of Vienna: he migrated to Rome with Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Pannartz, the earliest printers on Italian ground. The first book printed in the neighbourhood of Rome, under the direction of Cardinal Torquemada, administrator of the monastery of Subiaco, was a folio edition of Lactantius, in Roman type, "*Lactantii Firmiani de divinis institutiōibus adversus gentes libri septem*—Sub año dñi MCCCCLXV. die vero añpenultiā mensis Octobris. In venerabili monasterio Sublacensi." Sweynheim was the engraver of the type, and Pannartz and his assistants were the compositors and printers: the cost of the work having been defrayed by the monastery of Subiaco, the names of Sweynheim and Pannartz did not appear in the colophon. They had established their residence at Rome, and there printed the *editio princeps* of Cicero's "*Epistolæ ad Familiares*." "*Hoc Conradus opus suueynheim ordine miro Arnoldusq;*

stance of Fra Angelico having been a monk of the convent of the church, where he died in 1455 (Pass., i., 131).

simul pannartz una æde colendi Gente theotonica : romæ expediere sodales. In domo Petri de Max̄io MCCCCLXVII."

Other editions of the "Meditationes", in Gothic type, were issued by Ulric Hahn in 1473, and 1478, with impressions from the same blocks (Bibl. Spenc., vi., 278), followed by a small folio in 1479 (Bibl. Spenc., iv., 38), with the following colophon:—"Impresse p iohannem numeister clericum maguntinū Anno dñi millesimo quadringentisimo septuagesimonono die tertia mēsis septēbris feliciter sunt consummate." The cuts contained in the book are surrounded by a broad leaf-pattern border, and are worked in a peculiar manner, of which no other example is known: the composition is rendered by a strong outline, the intervening spaces being covered by straight lines, varied in their direction, without gradation of thickness, or any attempt at cross hatching, placing the whole surface in opaque shadow. It is the only known book from the press of Numeister. Dr. Lippmann considers Numeister was an assistant of Gutenberg at Mayence, and that his volume of the *Meditationes* was printed by him at Foligno, in association with Emiliano de Orfinis. In 1498, the last of this series of illustrated editions of the *Meditationes* was printed in quarto, at Rome, also in Gothic type. "Impresum Rome per magistrū Stephanum Planck de Patavia: Anno domini .m.cccc.xcviii. die vero .xxi. Mensis Augusti." The cuts are engraved, apparently on metal: the style of their delineation, in clear distinct outline, is thoroughly Italian in character. The original motive, commencing with the first issue in 1467, is carried throughout the illustrations in all these editions of the *Meditationes* without alteration, except some slight variations in the position of the figures, and immaterial changes in their arrangement.

Amongst the earliest illustrated volumes issued from the presses in the Imperial city was the "*Mirabilia Romæ*," a small handbook for pilgrims, with rude cuts of the sacred places; it passed through several editions, in

which the names of Stephan Planck, Eucharius Silber, and other German printers appear. Another book for popular use, more than once reprinted, was a treatise on *chiromanzia*, with similar rude woodcuts.

We may here mention a curious pamphlet of six leaves printed at Rome, as an example of engraving applied to the events of the day. "Del diluuiio di Roma del M.CCCC.lxxxxv. Adi. iiii. di dicembre. Et daltre cose di gran marauiglia—Fine del tractato delli celesti segni e delle moderne tribulationi & della ultima acqua inundata nella ueneranda & sancta cipta di Roma—collecta et messa in uersi p messer Iuliano de Dati allaude della Celestiale corte Mcccclxxxxv." On the frontispiece the Tiber, which has overflowed its banks, is represented crossed by a bridge, a man in a tub, and another on a raft, being seen amongst the people overtaken by the flood: on the following leaf there is an engraving of the comet to which the flood was attributed.

The interpretation of the language of the Prophets, and of the prophecies of the Sibyls, in their allusion to the advent of Our Saviour, was a topic of repeated controversy in the latter part of the century. The earliest printed book upon the subject, with figures in the text, is a small quarto published at Rome, "Opuscula Philippi de Barberiis—Imp̃ssum Ro. An. dñi. MCCCCLXXXI. . . . Die prima Mensis Decembris". Brunet (iv., 608) refers to the account of the differences between SS. Jerome and Augustine concerning these prophecies. The book contains numerous representations, very primitive in execution, in simple outline, of the twelve Prophets, the twelve Sibyls, Our Saviour, S. John the Baptist, the Madonna, Plato, and Proba Falconia¹:—a series of the poems, "Probe romane carmina," follows the

¹ Proba Falconia was a Latin poetess of the fourth century, celebrated in the middle ages. She wrote a "Cento Virgilianus" dedicated to the Emperor Honorius, in hexameter verse, compiled from the histories of the Old and New Testament. First published in folio at Venice in 1472, it was republished at Rome in 1481.

representation of the poetess. Dibdin, in his account of a copy in Earl Spencer's Library (Bibl. Spenc., iii., 173; vii., 19), which is accompanied with fac-similes of the figures of Sibylla Europa, and of Our Saviour surrounded by the emblems of His Passion, considers Philippus de Lignamine, who was a learned amateur, and wealthy promoter of the publications of the time, was the author of the treatise, as well as the printer of the volume.

A subsequent volume, also in small quarto, "*Tractatus sollemnis. et. vtilis editus per religiosum uirū magistrū Philippū Syculū Ordinis predicatorum*," without name, place, or date, has, at the end, the device of a woman holding a shield, whereon is a shaft with an arrow transfixed in it; a scroll is coiled over the woman's head, bearing the letters "S.R.D.A.," the initials of Sixtus Riessinger de Argento, showing that he was the printer. Brunet (iv., 608) writes of the book, with somewhat exaggerated laudation, that the Roman presses of the fifteenth century produced nothing more beautiful or more elegant or better ornamented, than this small volume; the woodcuts of the twelve Sibyls and Proba Falconia in its pages, are much superior to those in the "*Opuscula Philippi de Barberiis*" which preceded it. In the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iii., 178), fac-similes of Proba Falconia, an artistically-drawn figure with diagonal shadows introduced in the folds of the drapery, and of the printer's device, are given.

The German printers, who had migrated to Rome, extended their operations to Naples, which were commenced by Sixtus Riessinger with the issue of an edition of "*Bartholus de Saxo ferrato*," in 1471. The first illustrated publication by Riessinger at Naples was a folio edition of the "*Philocolo*" of Boccaccio (Bibl. Spenc., vii., 23). "*Incomencia il libro primo di florio et di bianzefiore chiamato philocolo—Impressa in la excellētissima Cita de Neapol. Regina della Italia. Per lo Venerabele mastro Sixto Russinger todisco—Alli. viii. de Marzo M.CCCC.LXXVIII.*" Riessinger's

device is at the foot of the colophon. Some extremely rude woodcuts are interspersed in the text, the author being represented at the commencement, seated at a desk, writing his romance.

The psalter and portions of the sacred writings in Hebrew were the works for which the presses at Naples became eminent. But we have first to describe a folio edition of the Fables of Æsop, published in 1485, remarkable for the artistic skill of its spirited and clever illustrations. The volume commences with the dedication by its author: "Francisco del Tuppo Neapolitano allo Illustrissimo Honorato de Aragonia Gaitano. Conte de Fundi. Collaterale dello Serenissimo Re Don Ferando. Re de Sicilia Prothonotario et Logothetha benemerito Felicitate", followed by "Libistici Fabulatoris Esopi Vita feliciter incipit.": on the last leaf but one is the colophon, preceding the Tabula, "Francisci Tuppi Parthenopei utriusque juris disertissimi studiosissimiq; in vitam Esopi fabulatoris læpidissimi philosophiq; clarissimi traductio materno sermone fidelissima: & in ejus fabulas allegoriæ cū exemplis antiquis modernisq; finiunt fæliciter. Impressæ Neapoli sub Ferdinando Illustrissimo Sapientissimo atq; Iustissimo in Siciliæ Regno triumphatore. Sub Anno Domini M.CCCC.LXXXV. Die XIII. Mensis Februarii. Finis Deo Gratias."

The incidents of Æsop's life are represented in a series of twenty-two scenes, occupying rather more than half the leaf; in the last, the size of the page, Æsop lies dead on the ground, the Delphians being gathered on the summit of the rock from which they have thrown him. At the commencement of the Fables there is a wide border of arabesque decoration with winged children, thrown up by a black ground, highly artistic in design and treatment; the fables, and the scenes of the life, are very graphically represented, and surrounded by an ornamented margin, a lunette, with one of the Labours of Hercules, or other subject, being

added at the top of some of the fables. Noël Humphrey, in his "History of the Art of Printing" (124), gives a facsimile of the large border from the Soncino Hebrew Bible, which was the important work undertaken by the printers at Naples, and expresses concurrence in the opinion, that the engraving of it, and of the scenes in the *Æsop*, was made upon metal; an opinion confirmed by the unbroken firmness of line the drapery and other parts of the groups of figures are worked with.

The Jews were subjected to great persecution at Naples, and eventually driven out of the city. They resumed the printing the Scriptures in Hebrew in the town of Soncinum, where, in 1488, the *editio princeps* of the entire Hebrew Bible was first issued by Abraham Colorito and a family of German Jews, the border-plate, engraved at Naples for the edition of *Æsop*, being used for the first leaf. Very few copies of this Bible are extant: an imperfect one, accompanied with a Latin translation by Archbishop Cranmer, is in the King's Library in the British Museum.

Another Hebrew Bible, without place or date, was issued, most probably at Soncinum or Naples, by the same association of printers, towards the end of the century. A copy is in the British Museum Library, catalogued as the Neapolitan Bible of 1491. It is ornamented with a page border of elaborately figured design, similar in character to the border in the *Æsop*, but worked on a white ground, engraved also apparently on metal. A winged child seated on a horse covered with jewelled trappings is in the margin on the left; above him is a peacock with expanded feathers, clutching with its claws the back of a crouching hare; in the lower margin, where a circular medallion bearing an heraldic device is in the centre, a stag pursued by a hound is at the left, and at the right there is a winged child on the back of another stag, clinging to its antlers; in the upper margin a greyhound chases three hares running to the right, where another child is seated blowing a horn.



CHAPTER XX.

VENETIAN BOOKS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.



THE first printing press established in Venice was in 1469, by Johannes de Spira, who commenced his operations with an edition of Cicero's "Epistolæ ad Familiares." His account of himself we derive from the colophon :—

"Primus in Adriaca formis impressit aenis
Urbe Libros Spira genitus de stirpe Iohannes
In reliquis sit quanta uides spes lector habenda
Quom Labor hic primus calami superauerit artem
M.CCCC.LXVIII".

The Seigniory conceded to him the exclusive privilege, dated 18th September, 1469, for five years, of printing, and selling his own books, and any books elsewhere published ; but his death, shortly afterwards, put an end to the monopoly.

The rapid progress made in typography in the city is told in the enumeration by Panzer of 198 printers by name in Venice, prior to the end of the century. The invention was peculiarly opportune, at a time when the attention of the learned throughout Europe was directed to the recovery of the MSS. of the writers of antiquity, and the "editiones principes" that were issued were famous, almost from the

outset of the establishment of printing, for the beauty of their type.

Before two years had passed away, since the first press had been set up by Johannes de Spira, Christopher Valdarfer became distinguished amongst the printers in the city. In 1471 he published the rare folio edition of Boccaccio's *Decamerone*. A perfect copy, long considered to be unique, was obtained from a London bookseller in the middle of the last century, by an ancestor of the Duke of Roxburghe, for one hundred guineas. The significant lettering of the binding—"Concilium Tridenti"—materially assisted, as Dr. Dibdin remarks, in concealing the book from the anathema which had been pronounced against it, and saving it from destruction. At the sale of the duke's library by auction in London in 1812, after his death, the book was purchased by the Marquis of Blandford, afterwards Duke of Marlborough, for £2,260. It was subsequently found that other copies were in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, and in the Bibliothèque at Paris, both slightly imperfect. At the sale of the Duke of Marlborough's books, in 1819, the volume was bought by Earl Spencer, who had been the duke's opponent for it in 1812, for £918, and in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (ii. 53, vi.) a detailed description of it is given.

The process of introducing illustrations in the text of printed books, first brought into use at Rome, was greatly improved in artistic character, prior to its adoption at Venice. A folio edition of Valturius de re militari "Iohannes ex uerona oriundus: Nicolai cyrugie medici filius: Artis impressorie magister: hunc de re militari librum elegantissimum: litteris & figuratis signis sua in patria primus impressit. An. M.CCCCLXXII.", was published at Verona in 1472, with woodcuts, after the designs of Matteo Pasti; the author and the engraver served together under Sigismond Malatesta of Rimini, to whom the author dedicated his work. The engravings show great freedom of drawing in

their execution, and sustain comparison with many of the fine illustrated works, which subsequently were issued. Valturius, in one of his letters, writes that his friend Matteo Pasti was eminent as a painter and sculptor, and equally skilful as an engraver.

This volume of Valturius (1472) was generally regarded as the first book with a date issued by the printers of North Italy, with woodcuts in its pages. V^{te}. Delaborde, however, in his "*Gravure en Italie*," refers (p. 252) to an edition of Valerius Maximus, printed at Venice in the preceding year,—"Valerii Maximi dictorum et factorum rubricæ"—with the date MCCCCLXXI. on the recto of the last leaf, followed by "*Impressum formis justoque nitore coruscans hoc Vindelinus condidit artis opus.*" V^{te}. Delaborde describes the book as illustrated, on the recto of the third leaf, with "a large ornamented letter, and another wood engraving in the margin at the bottom, below the text, representing two winged children—two genii—upholding with their hands festoons of foliage, coiled to the right and left. Between the children, at the foot of a shield which occupies the centre of the composition, two rabbits are at play. The whole is designed with much elegance and far more skilfully engraved, than any other of the works of the same kind which, up to that time, had been published in Italy." A copy of the volume, purchased at the sale of the Wodhull Library in London, January, 1886, is in the writer's possession. The festoons extending from the hands of the children are of cleverly designed arabesques of foliage, the letter V at the commencement of the text, and a small panel of similar ornament at the top of the page, being correspondent in treatment. The woodcuts are artistic in drawing, but disconnected in their outline, and very primitive in the method of their cutting.

The same blocks were used, V^{te}. Delaborde informs us, for the ornamentation of an edition of the *Rhetorica* of

Trapezuntius, 1472, and other books, subsequently printed by the same printer.

The art of woodcutting had been practised in Venice from an early period in the century, in the manufacture of playing-cards. An appeal was made to the Senate by the card-makers, dated 11th Oct., 1441, complaining of the foreign commerce in "*carte da zugar e figure depinte stampide fuor di Venezia*" (Pass. i., 130), and a decree was issued, forbidding the sale of pictures, printed figures, and cards, from abroad, under a heavy pecuniary penalty. But we have no further evidence of the local utilization of the process, until shortly after the establishment of the printing-presses in the city.

The first example, according to Brunet (i., 357), of the introduction of engravings in a book printed at Venice, appeared six years subsequent to the above-named folio of Valerius Maximus, in an edition of Appianus—"De bellis civilibus Romanorum"—printed by Ehrard Radholt, of Augsburg, in association with Bernardus, a painter, for the supply of the illustrations, and Peter Loslein of Langenzenn in Bavaria, as corrector of the press—"Impressum est hoc Venetijs per Bernardū pictorem & Erhardum ratdolt de Augusta una cum Petro loslein de Langencen correctore ac socio. Laus Deo. M.CCCC.LXXVII." The first page of each of the divisions of the volume is ornamented with a border designed in white upon a black ground, the initial letters in the text being similarly treated (P. i., 135). The borders are marked with a small minuscule *б*, which Nagler interpreted to be the signature of Bernardus, who was, he considered, an Italian painter in partnership with Radholt, as mentioned in the above-named colophon. The letter has been supposed, without any authority, to be the initial of the names of Bellini, Botticelli, and others (Brulliot, part ii.; Appendix, 28). Passavant (i., 137) discusses the various attributions that have been made of it.

Radholt appears to have taken some part in the execution of the cuts his books are ornamented with ; he had issued, in the previous year, an edition of the often printed calendar of Johannes Muller, of Königsberg (Regiomontanus), with a decoration of tendrils starting from two bases on the first page, in pure Italian character, followed by mathematical figures in the text, which, from the information he gives in a volume subsequently mentioned, were, we may assume, designed and engraved by him.

A “*Fasciculus Temporum*” published by Radholt in 1480 (P. i., 135), with some few woodcuts, a view of the Doge’s palace at Venice being amongst them, had been preceded by a folio edition of it in the previous year, by Georgius Walch (Brunet, ii., 1187), who was apparently the printer mentioned by Dr. Lippmann in his notice of Jacobo de’ Barbari, to whom reference has previously been made (p. 291). The work, commencing with an account of Creation, was originally compiled by Walter Rolewink, a Carthusian friar, and was frequently re-issued ; a German version, the first which was ornamented with woodcuts, had made its appearance at Cologne so early as 1474. In the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iii., 322), fac-similes are given of the figure of Our Saviour as Creator, and of the view of the Doge’s palace, from an edition printed by Radholt at Venice, in 1481 :—“*Fasciculus temporū oēs quasi antiquas choronicas (sic) mortaliū usq3 ad hec tempora cōplectens felicīt explicit Impressusq3 impensa & arte mira Erhardi rodolt (sic) de augusta 1481, 12 caleñ Jañ.*” The woodcuts are rude of execution, but artistic in their treatment.

In 1482, Radholt published the *editio princeps* of Euclid, with geometrical figures, engraved on metal, in the margins, “*Erhardus ratdolt Augustensis impressor solertissimus. venetiis impressit. Anno salutis M.cccc.lxxxii. Octauis. Caleñ. Juñ. Lector. Vale,*” which Dibdin (*Bibl. Spenc.*, ii., 23) praises in glowing terms, as a beautiful specimen of typography, and gives a quotation from Radholt’s preface,

wherein he states that, "from the difficulty of explaining problems by means of geometrical figures, 'sine quibus nihil in his disciplinis fere intelligi optime potest,' he therefore had undertaken, with great diligence, spirit, and labour, the manufacture of his own figures," from which we gather that Radholt was the engraver of them. The type used by Radholt is extremely crisp and distinct, being in this respect unsurpassed by that of any of his contemporaries, and the setting up of his books fully merits Dibdin's praise of it. His edition of "Joannis de sacro busto sphericū opusculū. Impressum mira arte ⁊ diligentia Erhardi Ratdolt Augustensis 2 Noñ. Julii Anno Salutis. 1482," published in the same year, is equally commendable, both for the beauty of its type, and of the diagrams and floreated letters introduced in its pages.

In the same year Radholt printed the "Poeticon Astronomicon" of Hyginus, with large coarsely engraved woodcuts, and three years later (in 1485) published a reissue of it, with a different series of woodcuts, corresponding in composition, but smaller in size, and more carefully executed. In the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iii., 386-392) there are several fac-similes from each volume; Passavant (i., 135), describing those in the second edition, expresses the opinion that they are from the designs of the painter Bernardus, previously mentioned as Radholt's colleague in the publication of the "Appianus de bellis civilibus Romanorum." The second set of cuts of the "Poeticon Astronomicon" was used for later editions, and in numerous subsequent reprints they were adopted and copied.

The most artistic of Radholt's books, fully supporting the unsparing praise wherewith he commends it to his readers, is a small quarto of the works of the Florentine writer, Jacobus Publicius, "Epitoma Artis Oratoriae," "Ars scribendi epistolas," and "Ars Memoriae." "Erhardus Ratdolt augustēsis ingenio miro & arte ppolita impressioni mirifice dedit. 1485. pridie caleñ. februarii. Venetiis." In the

text of the volume there is a curious alphabet, explanatory of the "Ars Memorie", in a series of engraved letters, enclosed in circles, white upon a black ground, with an accompanying device to aid in impressing the letters on the memory.

On the same page as the colophon there is a large woodcut, wherein animals, birds, and fishes, twenty-five in number, emblematical of the twenty-five letters, are represented in squares, sharp and clear in their drawing; a detailed description is in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iii., 472), with fac-similes of many of the woodcuts.

One of the earliest dated Venice books, noticeable for the beauty of its illustrations, is a small 4to "Dialogo de la Sancta Catherina Impressa in Venetia per Mathio di codeca Mccccclxxxiii adi xvii de mazo." The first page bears a representation of S. Catherine enthroned in an enclosed garden, with a female saint kneeling on the right and left, and God the Father in a glory above, with a saint and cherubim in the air at either side. On page a. 1, S. Catherine stands in a chamber, instructing three youths, who are seated on the left; God the Father in a radiant glory, and the Holy Spirit, are over the Saint's head. In a third cut, on the reverse of x. 7, S. Catherine is in a richly-decorated chapel, kneeling before an altar, whereon is a sculptured group of the Madonna and Child, having "IESVS" inscribed over it, and "AVE MARIA" is on the pedestal; the figure of the Saviour in the tomb is on the front of the altar;—S. Catherine, with clasped hands, looks upwards in adoration at a flamboyant vision of the crucified Saviour in the air above her. The volume, from its dedication to Isabella (of Aragon) the wife of Gian Galeazo Sforza, and Beatrix (d'Este) the wife of Lodovico Sforza, whose marriage did not take place until 1490, is of a later date than that in the colophon. An example of it, printed upon the same paper, with the same water mark, set up line for line in the same type, "Impressa in Venetia per Mathio di codeca Mccccclxxxiiii adi xvii de mazo," is in the writer's

possession, the only difference being in the stated year of the publication.

For some brief period, succeeding that to which our attention has been directed, the presses of Venice were not distinguished for the illustrated works they sent forth. Radholt the printer, who for ten years had been energetically employed upon the publications issued under his superintendence, left the city in 1486, and returned to his native town of Augsburg, where he remained until his death in 1516.

The study of astronomy was diligently pursued in Venice, and several editions of the "Poeticon Astronomicum" of Hyginus, first printed by Radholt in 1482, were issued. Passavant (i., 135) gives a brief notice of a book, "Guido Bonatus de Foligno, decem continens tractatus astronomiæ, Venetiis 1489", with one of the earliest Venetian metal engravings on the title, where the author is represented seated in his chair, the circle of the Zodiac being above, supported, on the left, by an allegorical figure of Astronomy, and by the Muse Urania, in the form of a naked woman, on the right. The first edition of the book of Guido Bonatus, mentioned by Brunet, is of the year 1491: "Liber astronomicus—explicit—Magistri Johannis angeli—correctione Erhardiq, ratdolt—eximia industria & mira imprimendi arte : qua nuper veneciis : nunc Auguste vindelicorum excellit nominatissimus. Septimo kal' Aprilis . M.cccc.lxxxxj." We learn from the colophon that Radholt, at the date of it, was resident in Augsburg.

In 1489 a small 4to volume was published by the printer of the "Dialogo de la Sancta Catherina,"—"Incominciano le deuote meditatione sopra la passione del nostro signore.—Finesse le meditatione del nostro signore iesu christo con li misterii posti in figura impresse in Venetia per Matheo dico de cha da Parma del MCCCCLXXXIX a di xxvii de Febuario," followed by the printer's device, in white lines on a black ground, of the three letters, "M. C. P.", and a design

of a building in a circle, with a double cross rising upwards from the centre of it. The volume contains eleven woodcuts, slightly shaded, $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches square, of the Passion of Our Saviour, commencing with the Raising of Lazarus, and ending with the Crucifixion on the verso of d. 1. The different scenes are highly artistic and dramatic in their drawing, but some are indistinct in their cutting: two, if not three, hands were employed upon them. The best of the series are the subjects of Our Saviour before Pilate, His Scourging, and His Mocking, and the Procession to Calvary, which are far more clearly and artistically executed, and have much of the character of the cuts of the Mallermi Bible, presently to be mentioned. A fine example of the book is in the National Library at Florence. The foregoing account is taken from a copy in the writer's possession: a reprint of it, of the following year (1490), with some changes in the woodcuts, is in the collection of Mr. William Mitchell, in London.¹

The earliest illustrated Bible printed at Venice was a folio with the translation of Nicolo di Malherbi, or Mallermi,² the first issue of it having apparently been made in 1490: "Stampata ne l'alma citta di Venetia per Giovanne Ragazo di monterato a instantia di Luchantonio di Giunta, 1490." There is a later edition of 1492 by the same printer, of

¹ In the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* for October and November, 1885, the Duc de Rivoli published an essay "Apropos d'un livre a figures Venitien de la fin de XV^e siecle," accompanied with numerous fac-similes, wherein he describes the various editions, nearly twenty in number, of the "deuote meditatione," commencing with one issued at Milan, "Mediolano, per Leonardo Pachel et Ulderico Seinzenzeller de Alemania nel MCCCCLXXX a di vii de Octobre," in 4to, in Gothic type, ornamented with woodcuts:—The last in the list is an edition published at Venice on the 26th August, 1517, by Agostino de Zani de Portese.

² The Bible of Nicolo di Mallermi, compiled from the translations of numerous writers and commentators, was first published at Venice, "Biblia volgare historiata (per Nicolo di Mallermi)—Impresso per questo volume—ne l'alma patria de Venecia MCCCCLXXI In Kalende de Augusto" (Brunet, i., 892; *Bibl. Spenc.*, vi., 44).

which a copy is in Earl Spencer's library (Bibl. Spenc., vi., 47). On the reverse of a. viii an arabesque border in outline surrounds the first page of the text of the Old Testament. Small vignettes, very spirited and clever in their drawing, amounting to nearly four hundred in number, many of them marked with the minuscule b, are interspersed throughout the volume. The blocks or plates of them subsequently were used for a quarto Latin Bible, "Impressum Venetiis p Symonem dictu³ beuilaqua 1498 die octauo Maii"; on the reverse of the seventh leaf of the prefatory "Summaria" there is a representation, in six divisions, of the days of Creation, a full-length figure of God the Father being in each division, printed from a block, engraved for the Latin Chronicle next to be mentioned. Vignettes are at the commencement of the Prophetical books, of the principal incidents in each Prophet's career. A large cut precedes the Book of Proverbs on B. I, of King Solomon, "Re Salamum," reclining on a couch in a richly-decorated chamber, with courtiers in attendance, the figure of the King being introduced a second time in the same cut, seated at a desk on the left, writing the Proverbs. Besides the letter b on a considerable proportion of the vignettes, the letter F is on two of them. On the last page is the printer's device, white upon a black ground, of a leafless tree, having an eagle perched on the fork of the projecting branches, whereon, at either side, a shield blazoned with a coronet is suspended, and a scroll is coiled round the trunk of the tree, inscribed, "Simon Bivilaqua." The Bible passed through several subsequent editions, in some of which different cuts were added. Changes and additions in the Old Testament were made in an edition of 1511, and in the New Testament other cuts, upright in form and varied in character, with diagonal shading, were substituted (Brunet, i., 874, 894).

A Latin Chronicle of the World was extremely popular in the latter part of the fifteenth century; the numerous

editions it passed through tell of the repute it was held in. There is some uncertainty as to the date of its first issue; Brunet quotes (Bergomensis) one of 1483. The author, Jacobus Philippus, a member of the family of the Foresti of Bergamo, became a friar of the Order of the Eremites, and held a prominent position in the literary society of Venice, as he subsequently did in that at Ferrara: in the account of the books he edited there (p. 266), under the patronage of the Duchess Eleonora, some further particulars respecting him are given. On the reverse of the first leaf of the Chronicle, "*Supplementum Chronicarum*," there is a print of the six days of Creation, in single figures of God the Father, the page being surrounded by an extremely elegant arabesque border, with female chimeræ at the top, and children at play at the foot. The centre block of the Six Days of Creation was subsequently used, as previously mentioned, for a quarto Bible of 1498. The designs in the text of the Chronicle consist of views of cities, many of them correct in their details, but rude and slight in their cutting.

The account here given is derived from an edition of the Chronicle brought down to 1490, the colophon concluding: "*Hoc qppe in exordio huius opis me facere promisi pfectū autē est, ⁊ denuo castigatū atq; auctū p me opus fuit idibus Octobris anno a natali xp̄iano 1486, in civitate nostra Bergomi,—mihi vero a nativitate 52°. Impressum autem Venetiis per magistrum Bernardinū riciū de Nouaria M.CCCC.LXXXXII die decimo quinto Februarii.*" The author, it is to be observed, supplements the information given in the colophon, which he had done in previous editions, with the unusual statement of his age, from which we learn that he was born in 1434.

The Fables of Æsop with illustrations, were first printed at Verona in 1479, as previously noticed in the account of the Florence books. The earliest Venice edition, with outline woodcuts surrounded by arabesque borders, the same

in design as those of the Verona volume, is a small quarto of the year 1490, according to the description, accompanied by several fac-similes, given by Dibdin in his *Bibliographical Decameron* (i., 190). Æsop is represented on the title seated at a desk, dictating to a scribe writing in front of him, and some of his auditors are at the sides. Later issues of the book are mentioned by Brunet (i., 98), one of 1492, followed by another of the 8th November, 1493: a preceding edition of the same year is in the writer's possession, "*Impressum venetiis per Manfredum de monteferato de sustreuo M.CCCC. 93, adi 17 Agosto.*" In the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iv., 235), description is given of a subsequent publication of the volume at Venice in 1497.

Several folio editions of Petrarch's Poems were printed at Venice, with representations of the Triumphs: the first quoted by Brunet (iv., 541), is of "1486 adi vii di Zugno". The designs of the subjects of Fame and Religion are derived from the engravings of them attributed to Filippo Lippi. The six compositions of these Venice books are in outline, surrounded by arabesque borders, the size of the page; the blocks of the borders were subsequently used for the ornamentation of an edition of the "*Comedia di Dante. 1491 adi III marzo.*"

In the year 1491 two separate publications of Dante's "*Divina Comedia*" were issued by different printers, with woodcuts in the text: the one, "*ī uenetia p Bernardino benali & Matthio da parma del MCCCCLXXXI adi III marzo,*" has an engraving the size of the leaf preceding each of the divisions of the *Comedia*, with a smaller one, rather more than two and a half inches square, at the commencement of each succeeding canto; there is no mark or letter upon any of them. The first nineteen designs of the "*Inferno*" are freely imitated, with some exceptions, from the engravings by Baldini after the Botticelli drawings, in the Florence Dante of 1481: but there the resemblance

ceases, and, commencing with the twentieth canto until the end of the *Comedia*, we see the artist had no acquaintance with the remainder of the Botticelli drawings. His compositions, however, are full of original invention, many, especially at the latter part of the "*Paradiso*," being of great beauty of design. The other volume, "*Impresso in Vinegia per Petro Cremonese dito Veronese Adi xviii di novēbrio. M.CCCC.LXXXXI.*", is without the large illustration at the commencement of the first cantos of the "*Inferno*," "*Purgatorio*," and "*Paradiso*": instead of it there is a small woodcut of the subject, the same in size as the rest of the series, the whole of them being somewhat larger than the vignettes in the March publication of the same year: the treatment of the engravings throughout both volumes is nearly identical. On some of the cuts of this, the November edition, we have a small b similar to the letter originally made use of in the Appianus of Radholt of 1477. There is no mention of the March edition of the Dante in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*: Dibdin apparently was unacquainted with it: in the account he gives of the one issued in November (*Bibl. Spenc.*, vi., 115) fac-similes of several of the cuts are introduced in the text.¹

These volumes of the "*Divina Comedia*" had been preceded by another folio edition, printed in 1487 at Brescia, "*per Boninum de Bononis di raguzi adi ultimo di mazo*", containing large outline woodcuts the size of the page; with the exception of the first nineteen of these woodcuts, some of which are likewise adapted from the Florence edition of 1481, they are all faulty in composition, and rude and bad in their coarse execution.

A compilation of the *Lives of the Saints* was printed

¹ In Venice and in Florence the first day of the year was the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25), so that the edition of the Dante "*Adi xviii di novembrio MCCCCLXXXXI*" is earlier by nearly four months than the edition "*Adi III marzo MCCCCLXXXXI*," and the cuts in the November edition are the originals from which those in the March edition were copied.

in 1491 :—"Incominciano le vite de sancti Padri per diversi eloquentissimi doctores vulgarizate. Venetia p Gio-vāne Ragazo de monteferato ad instantia di Luchantonio de Giunta Fioretino 1491 A di xxv di Zugno". The cuts in its pages are extremely spirited, and the small b is again introduced in many of them. Their use in numerous subsequent reprints, without any observable breakage of outline, confirms the opinion that metal instead of wood was the material they were engraved upon. In an edition published at Venice, "Per Francesco di Alexādro Bindoni & Mapheo Pasyni cōpagni Nel anno MDXXXII Del mese di Aprile", the impressions are nearly as sharp as in their first printing forty-one years previously.

In the last month of the same year (1491) we have a Latin translation of Plutarch's Lives, in two volumes, by the printer of "Le vite de Sancti Padri :"—"Plutarchi Vitae—Venetiis impressæ per Ioannem Rigatium de Monteferrato. Anno salutis. M.CCCC.LXXXI. die uero septimo decembris." accompanied by the Giunta mark. An arabesque border in outline, with chimerical figures, birds, and trophies, of great beauty and elegance of design, surrounds the first page of each volume, and a large vignette of the fight of Theseus with the Minotaur is at the beginning of the text. There is no mark upon either of them, but the style has some resemblance with that of the engraver of the November edition of the Dante of the same year. The drawing of the group of Theseus and the Minotaur, distinctly in the style of Pollajuolo, is of great artistic excellence, and the execution of it, and likewise of the border, is unsurpassed in the animation of its composition by any example of the time which issued from the presses at Venice.

A small quarto of the rules of S. Benedict, followed by those of SS. Basil and Augustine, and other Fathers of the Church, commencing on the red letter title, "Habes isto volumine lector cādidiss. quatuor—approbatas—regulas—

Venetiis—Cura ꝛ impensis nobilis viri Luċ Antonij de Giunta Florētini,” is ornamented with three cuts, the size of the page,—on the reverse of a. 11, of full-length figures of S. Benedict and his sister, S. Scholastica; on the reverse of b. 1, of SS. Benedict, Basil, and Augustine, with a crowd of kneeling worshippers at their feet, God the Father being in a glory above; and page b. v. is surrounded by an arabesque border of very spirited treatment, with a small vignette at the beginning of the text, of full-length figures of S. Benedict and S. Justina. This last-named border is used on the title of “*Tribisonda istoriata nela quale si contiene nobillissime Battaglie con la vite e morte di Rinaldo—Impresso in Venesia MCCCCLXXXII*”, with numerous cuts in the text, similar in character to those of the Bible of 1490, several of them being marked with the letter F, and one with the minuscule b.

The border was again adopted for the title of “*La vita del nostro Signore misere iesu xpo : e de la sua gloriosa madre virgene Madona Sancta Maria*”, a small quarto without place or date, published at Venice most probably, about the same time as the preceding volume. Several cuts of the incidents of Our Saviour’s life, many marked with the minuscule b, are interspersed in the text, one, of the Baptism of Our Saviour, being copied from the print of the subject by Moceto.





CHAPTER XXI.

VENETIAN BOOKS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS

(CONTINUED).



HERE is scarcely any knowledge extant respecting the artists who were employed in supplying the designs for the books we have given the account of. Their publication had rapidly increased in number, and a large proportion were remarkable for their fine type, and the beautiful ornamentation of their pages.

Many of the printers were renowned for their learning. Wealthy princes and nobles, at whose expense editions of much cost were issued, are named in deservedly laudatory prefaces. But of the artists, to whom we are indebted for their decoration, no record of their names, nor a word in commendation of their share in the work, has come down to us. Our only clue to their identification, besides an occasional letter or monogram, is the mention of "Bernardus pictor," the colleague of Radholt, regarded as the author of the designs marked with the minuscule letter b.

Some of the rarest volumes of the illustrated literature which issued from the presses of Venice, in the last decade of the fifteenth century, are the editions of the Italian novelists. Owing to the repeated efforts made for their suppression, very few copies have been preserved, and

we are indebted to the valuable library of Earl Spencer in England for much of the information we have about them. The particulars supplied by Brunet in his *Manuel du Libraire* were, to a great extent, derived from the examples in the Althorp library. First in importance amongst them is a folio edition of Boccaccio's "*Decamerone*:"—"Finisce lo elegantissimo *Decamerone*: cioe le cento novelle detto: dello excellentissimo poeta Giovani Bocchacio da certaldo. Impresso ī Venetia per Giovani et Gregorio di gregorii fratelli . MCCCCLXXXII addi xx de giugno". There is not a copy in the British Museum Library; the only known example in London is in Mr. Turner's collection. Brunet derived the slight account he gives of the volume from the brief notice in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (vi., 299).

This edition of Boccaccio's tales contains one of the most attractive series of vignettes, which up to the date of its publication had been produced. They are by the same coterie of artists who affixed the small minuscule b upon their contributions to the works we have described, the letter being seen upon several of the cuts of the *Decamerone*. An arabesque border surrounds the first page, of children at play with some goats at the base, and other children sustaining festoons at the summit. The vignette, at the commencement of the text, represents a trellised alcove, with trees and birds on their branches, at the right; a building rises to the upper margin at the left, with its outer wall removed, showing in the inner chamber a group of some of the heroines of the tales. The ten narrators of them are seated in a semicircle, before the alcove, with their names inscribed on the grass plat at their feet, a rabbit and a pheasant being seen in the tufted herbage in front. The woodcut is repeated at the beginning of seven of the ten divisions of the *Decamerone*, and a small outline vignette accompanies each of the tales, portraying the principal events in the story. In that at the head of the "*Vita de Giovan: Bocchaccio d Certaldo*"

the figure of the author is seated at a desk, writing his book.

In the following month an edition of the novels of Masuccio Salernitano was issued by the same printers, of corresponding merit with the Decamerone in its engravings, and the volume is no less rare. “Novellino de Masuccio Salernitano—Finisce el nouellino d̄ Masuccio Salernitano. Impresso in Venetia per Iohāni & Gregorio de Gregorii fratelli: in lāno della humana recuperatione Millesimo. CCCCLXXXII. ad di. xxi: de Luglio. Tenēte la inclita Veneta republica Agostino Barbarigo Duce Sere-nissimo.” On the first page of the text the author is represented on his knees, presenting his book to the Duchess Hippolyta of Calabria, who is seated on a raised dais, in an open hall of a palatial residence, attended by her ladies and courtiers. Numerous outline vignettes are in the volume equally spirited and clever in their drawing, by the artists of the Decamerone, highly interesting in their record of costume and manners at Venice at the end of the fifteenth century. A copy of the book is in Earl Spencer’s library (Bibl. Spenc., vi., 312).

Various similar editions of the early romances and collections of tales were likewise published, noticeable amongst them being the “Settanta nouelle” of Sabadino degli Arienti:—“In Venetia stampate per Bartholomeo de Zanni da Portese nel mcccciiii adi xx de Marzo”.

The “Libro della agrîcultura di Piero Crescentio” was frequently reprinted, containing in the text a few woodcuts of agricultural occupations, clever in their drawing, but they are small in size, and of minor importance.

In 1493 a folio Livy, in the Italian Vulgate, very fully illustrated by the same engravers, was published by Luca Antonio de Giunta,—“Tavola de le rubriche del primo libro dela prima deca de Tito Liuiο, padoano historico—Finite le Deche di Tito Liuiο Stāpate nella inclita citta de di Venetia per Zouane Vercellese ad instancia del nobile Ser

Luca antonio zonta Fiorentino. Nel Anno. M.CCCC.LXXXXIII. adi XI del mēse di Febraio" (P. i., 137). The cuts are of the same character and size as those in the previously mentioned Latin Bible of 1490, a marginal border being at the commencement of each of the three divisions of the histories. Some few of the cuts have upon them the minuscule b, and a large proportion are marked with the previously-named letter F, of which no attempted explanation has been given. On the vignette at the head of the twenty-ninth chapter, on the verso of PP. v, where Scipio addresses the Gods previous to his embarkation for Sicily, there is a large s, intended probably to designate the initial letter of Scipio's name, as it is the only instance of its use. Several later editions of the Livy were published, with impressions from the same blocks : they were followed by other of the works of the historians, similarly illustrated, of less artistic merit in their execution.

In the first month of 1494, a folio edition of Petrarch was published, with six representations of the Triumphs the size of the page : " Finit Petrarcha super summa diligētia a reverendo P. ordinis minorū magistro Gabriele bruno veneto terræ sanctæ ministro emendatus anno domini M.cccc.lxxxxiiii. die. xii Januarii". They differ in their composition from those in the volumes of Petrarch previously described, and, in the character of their drawing, from the treatment which prevails in the Venice books contemporary with them. An arabesque border, white on a black ground, surrounds each of the Triumphs, with tritons and nereids on either side of a medallion of a crowned head, apparently of Our Saviour, at the bottom, and dolphins are introduced at the top. The figures in the Triumphs, which are all directed to the right, careless and rude in their cutting, are delineated with great spirit. The car in the Triumph of Love is drawn by four horses, Cupid shooting an arrow from his bow being on the top of a pedestal whereon flames are burning. Chastity, holding a vase of flowers, is seated on her car, which is drawn

by two unicorns. Death, holding his scythe, stands on the pedestal of his car, which is drawn by two oxen. Fame, as a young woman, blowing a long horn, is seated on her car, bearing the inscription "FAMA" on the side, and drawn by two elephants. Time, as a naked child holding a balance, stands on the pedestal of the car, inscribed "TENPO", on the side, and drawn by two dragons. In the Triumph of Divinity, the car, similar to that in the Triumph of Time, with the child on its pedestal, but inscribed at the side "T. DIVINITATIS," is thrown to the ground, shattered and broken, and the two stags which were yoked to it lie panting in front. God the Father, surrounded by angels, is in a glory above, holding a book with "Α Ω" on its leaves.

In a Latin translation of Herodotus, issued in the spring of 1494, we have the most beautiful page-border which, since the publication of the Naples *Æsop* in 1485, had been executed: "Herodoti Halicarnasei Libri novem—traductio e græco in latinum per virum eruditissimum Laurentium Valensem. Venetiis impressa per Ioannem & Gregoriū de Gregoriis Fratres. Anno domini. M.CCCC.XCIII. die. VIII. Martii." The first page of the text is surrounded by a wide band of rich arabesque pattern, on a black ground: in a small medallion at the top, a satyr is seen by the side of an altar, about to sacrifice a goat; and, in a large medallion at the foot, two naked men are represented seated on a long stone bench, apparently at a well-head, and a woman fully draped, with a tall turret-shaped cap on her head, is seated on the right addressing them; the man nearest to the margin, on the left, holds the well-rope, the mask of a human face being at the end of it; in front of the group a girl, with one knee on the ground, kneels by the side of a vase, behind which lies a naked child; between the uprights of the framework of the well are the letters . S . C . P . I . There is no other engraving in the volume, except a cut, within the border on the first leaf, at the commencement of the text, of the interior of a library,

with Herodotus seated at one of the desks, and Apollo standing by his side placing a laurel-wreath on his head. In drawing and execution the page border is fully equal to the engravings in the *Hypnerotomachia*, produced five years later. Dr. Lippmann, in his "*Italienische Holzschnitt*" (p. 63), designates it as the most magnificent of all the typographical borders the presses of Venice produced.

In the same year was printed a small 4to manual of devotional instruction, "*Doctrina ⁊ nō puocho utile a quello che novamēte intrati sono nella religione del viuere religiosamente. Composita per lo Clementissimo Monsignor Patriarcha Beato Lorenzo Justiniano della cōgregatione di San zorgi de Aliga gentilhuomo fo de Venexia—Anno. M.CCCC.LXXXIII. Edita del Patriarcha Beato Laurētio Venetiano de Ka (casa ?) Justinian : laquale imp̃ssione fo . opiota a . xx. de Octobrio del anno supra notato.*"

On the reverse of the second leaf there is a woodcut, the size of the page, with a full-length figure of the author, costumed in a plain ecclesiastical robe and a skull-cap on his head, carrying a book under his right arm, the hand being upraised; he advances towards some lofty buildings on the right, preceded by an acolyte carrying a processional cross. Dr. Lippmann states (p. 63) that this figure of Lorenzo Justiniano is copied exactly from a portrait of him, painted by Gentile Bellini in tempera, in 1465, for the church of Maria del Orto: several personages are grouped around the ecclesiastic in the picture. On the recto of the first leaf, full-length figures of S. John the Baptist and S. Peter support a scroll, coiled in a large circle, with the sacred monogram in the centre, having the inscription on the scroll around it "*hec est summa veritas*", and three smaller circles above, are inscribed "*Filius*" "*Etñus Pater*" "*S̃ps̃sctūs*". On the verso of a blank leaf at the end there is a woodcut, with figures of S. John the Evangelist and S. Francis upholding a scroll, coiled also in four circles, the largest being inscribed in the centre, "*Maria*", with "*virgo*"

and "mater" on either side : three smaller circles are above, inscribed respectively "ānptū" (ante partum), "īptu" (in partu), and "ptptū" (post partum).

In 1495 the brothers Gregorius produced a small folio, with woodcuts larger in size than any hitherto attempted for the publications of the time, occupying the entirety of the page, "Fasciculus medicine compositus per excellentissimum artium ac medicine doctorem dominum Joānem de Ketham Alamanum—Impressum Venetiis per Joanneꝝ ⁊ Gregorius de Gregoriis fratres Anno dñi m.cccc.xcv. die xv Octobris". The surgical subjects, and the groups of figures of the doctor and his pupils, are by the hand of an artist who had studied at Padua or Mantua, from their marked similarity in style, and kindred expression, with Andrea Mantegna's drawing. The book passed through several editions, having been preceded by an earlier one by the same printers in 1491, containing only six woodcuts, not from the same blocks, corresponding in design, but inferior in the quality of their execution.

A folio volume, an epitome of the "Almagest" (Syntax of Astronomy) of Claudius Ptolomeus, by Johann Müller (Regiomontanus¹), was published at Venice in 1496. "Epytoma Joānis de mōte regio In almagestū Ptolomei—Explicit Magne Compositionis Astronomicon Epitoma Johannis de Regio monte. Impensis non minimis: curaꝝ ⁊ emendatione non mediocri virorum prestantiū Casparis Grossch: ⁊ Stephani Roemer. Opera quoꝝ ⁊ arte impressionis mirifica viri solertis Johannis hāman de Landoia: dictus hertzog: felicibus astris expletum. Anno a prima rerum etherearū circuitione. 8480. Sole in parte sexta decima virginis gradiente. In hemispherio Veneto: Anno salutis. 1496. currente: Pridie Caleñ. Septembris Venetijs: Maximiliano Romanorum rege primo Faustissime imperante." The volume contains a page of great artistic excellence, where Ptolemeus and Müller

¹ Johann Müller was born at Königsberg in 1436.

are represented seated, with their books before them, at either side of a table, whereon stands a large armillary sphere, with the signs of the Zodiac around it: the expanse of the heavens studded with the sun, moon, and stars, is above them. An arabesque border of elaborate design, white on a black ground, surrounds the page, inscribed at the sides and top, "ALTIOR INCVBVIT ANIMVS SUB IMAGINE MVNDI": the names "PTOLEMEVS" and "IOHANES DE MONTE . R ." are on scrolls beneath the seated astronomers.

From the laudatory terms employed in the colophon, in commendation of the printer's share in the compilation of this fine edition of the "Epytoma Johannis de monteregio," we gather how highly his talent was estimated by the colleagues he was connected with. Johannes Hamman had been engaged in Venice since 1490 in the pursuit of the "ars impressionis mirifica," as he termed it, in the words Radholt, fifteen years previously, made use of in defining his own printing operations. It does not, however, appear that Hamman, like his predecessor Radholt, applied himself to the execution of the illustrations he introduced in his books. Dr. Lippmann, in his "Italienische Holzschnitt" (42), refers to the first known publication of Hamman, "Johannes Crispus de Montibus: Repetitio tit: institutionum de heredibus:—Impressum Venetiis impensis atque diligentiori cura Johannis hamman de Landoia Alemani dicti Hertzog 1490," and gives a fac-simile of the figure of the man at the base of the large genealogical tree in the volume. The style of it is very different to that of the fine border of the volume of the "Epytoma" of 1496.

In 1497 appeared the first edition of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, translated into the Italian vulgate:—"Ouidio metamorphioseos vulgare—composta uulgarizata & alegorizata p Ioāni de bonignore de la cita di castello. Anno dominice icarnatiōis. M.CCCC.LXX. die. xx. Marcii.—Stampato in Venetia per Zoāne rosso uercellese ad instantia del nobile

homo miser Lucantonio zonta fiorentino del. M.CCCC.LXXXXVII. Adi. x. del mese de Aprile." Numerous cuts in outline are interspersed throughout the text, the letter N being upon five, and the letters **la**, the initials of the name of Zoan Andrea, upon sixteen of them, the remainder having no mark. An account of the volume, and of the page border at the commencement, designed with subjects of tritons and nereids, is given in the preceding account of Zoan Andrea (p. 202). The plate of this border was used two years afterwards, in 1499, for the frontispiece of an edition of Terence, which was more than once reprinted: there is no copy of the Terence in the British Museum. The following description is taken from a later edition, in the writer's possession, the same plate being used for the title page: "Terentius cum quinque cōmentis: v3 Donati: Guidonis: Calphur. Ascensii 7 Servii: cum gratia ob figuras:—Impressum Venetiis per Lazarum de Soardis die 3. Octob. 1515." On the reverse of the title there is a full-page representation of Terence crowned with laurel seated under a canopy in front of an alcove, in the centre of a columned hall, at a richly carved tribune, with his name inscribed on its base: six commentators are ranged, two on either side, with the names of "Donatus," "Ascensius," and "Servius" inscribed over the heads of three of them, two others, mentioned in the text, being seated at desks in front, "Guido" on the left, and "Calphurnius" on the right. On the reverse of B. iii. there is another large composition of the interior of a theatre, where the audience are seated on ranges of benches, with their looks directed towards a single actor, seen by the back, who stands in front, on the boards of the stage, addressing them: "COLISEVS SIVE THEATRVM" is inscribed on either side. The text throughout is accompanied with small cuts in outline of the scenes of the plays, very spirited in their drawing, consisting simply of a proscenium, represented by a curtain, whereon are inscribed the names of the characters. The plate of the title-page border was likewise used at the com-

mencement of one of the later editions of the “*Vite de Sancti Padri*”, first published by Lucantonio de Guinta in 1491 (see p. 326), and again for the frontispiece of the Comedies of Plautus :—“*M. Plauti linguæ latinæ Principis comœdia xx.—Impressum Venetiis per Iazarum Soardum Die XIII Augusti M.D.XI.*” The text of the Plautus comprises various cuts of the scenes in the comedies, of the same size and character as in the Terence, but very inferior artistically, and slight diagonal shading is introduced ; scrolls are over the figures of the actors, inscribed with their names. In the text of these early Italian books no allusion has been discovered to the material made use of for the production of their engravings.¹

From the unbroken sharpness preserved in the title-border of the Ovid of 1497, after the employment of it, several times repeated during a series of eighteen years, and likewise in the text illustrations of the volume, which betray in their use in the subsequent editions of 1505 and 1509 no symptom of fracture, the lines being nearly as crisp as in their first printing in 1497, we derive confirmation of the opinion, sustained by numerous similar instances, that many of these outline engravings were pro-

¹ Passavant, in the first volume of “*Le Peintre Graveur*” (pp. 97-101), adduces examples of engravings which, in his estimation, were printed from metal plates cut in relief, the illustrations of the “*Meditationes Johannis de Turrecremata*,” printed by Johannes Numeister, at Rome in 1479, being amongst them. M. Didot, in his “*Essai sur l’histoire de la Gravure sur Bois*,” printed at Paris in 1863 (col. 119), describes a French Book of Hours, “*Heures à l’usage de Rome, imprimées par Jean Dupré, à Paris*,” 1488, which contains the following passage immediately following the Calendar :—“*C’est le repertoire des hystoires et figures de la Bible tant du Vieil Testament que du Nouveau, contenant dedans les vignettes de ces presentes Heures imprimées en cuyvre.*” A copy of the book is in the British Museum library. The question is further discussed by M. Piot in “*Le Cabinet de l’Amateur*” for 1863 (pp. 67-74), where reproductions are given from certain of the French Books of Hours, and he quotes the colophons of two editions of the “*Belial*” of Jacopus de Theramo, printed at Strasburg in 1473 and 1478, wherein the words “*ereis figuris*” are used.

duced from metal plates, cut in relief, and not from wood blocks.

An examination of the illustrations of the "*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*," in the first edition of 1499, and in the later edition of 1545, supports the opinion, that metal plates were the medium for their engraving, as no symptom of breakage is observable, which must have occurred, had wood blocks been employed for printing from, after a lapse of forty-six years since their first cutting. The volume, issued at Venice in the month of December, 1499, is pre-eminent, in the rich fancy of its designs and the skill of their execution, as an example of the application of the art of engraving to the literature of the day.

The initial letters of the thirty-eight chapters of the "*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*" read "*Poliam Frater Franciscus Columna peramavit.*" At the foot of the last page but one there is the inscription: "*Tarvisii cum decorissimis Poliæ amore lorulis distineretur misellus Poliphilus. M.CCCC.LXVII. Kalendis Maii*", which may be interpreted "that the lovesick Poliphilus, whilst held in graceful bondage with the love of Polia, finished his book at Treviso on the 1st May, 1467."

The author who thus wrote, under the poetised name of Poliphilus (the lover of Polia), was Francesco Colonna. Prosper Marchand, in his Dictionary, published in 1758, describes Colonna, his account being based on researches made amongst the Dominican chroniclers, as a brother of that order, some years of whose life were passed in the cloisters of S. Niccolo at Treviso—that he was born at Venice, and died and was buried there in the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo. Marchese, in his *Lives of the Dominican Artists*, 8vo, Firenze, 1845, quoting from Federici's *Memorials of Treviso*, states Colonna was born at Venice in 1433, and that in 1455, in his twenty-second year, he became a member of the Predicants—that he resided at Treviso, holding the professorships of theology, rhetoric,

and languages, and in his thirty-fourth year wrote the "*Hypnerotomachia*." In 1473 he was at Padua, whence, in 1483, he went on a mission from his order to Venice. A further record, after a considerable lapse of time, informs us of his being at Venice in the receipt of relief of food and fuel, on account of age and infirmity, from the convent of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, in which convent he died, in the ninety-fourth year of his age, on the 2nd October, 1527. It has been imagined, from indications in the text of the book, that the heroine of the story was a Lelia Mauro, or a Lucretia or Ippolita de' Poli, of Treviso; but Polia most probably was merely an idealized personification of the heroine of Colonna's romance. The author, adopting the fiction of his great predecessor Dante, represents himself as wandering through a wood in a dream, fleeing before a monster dragon in a world of enchantment, with beautiful nymphs, Polia being amongst them, by whom he is accompanied and instructed in all he sees and admires, and that when the rising sun awakened him from his sleep in the morning the vision vanished.

The language, abounding with much richness of fancy in its expression, is a long dull rhapsody, effeminate and morbid in the extreme, notwithstanding Mr. Symond's more lenient estimate of it. The story, with its mingled mundane passions and archæological pedantry, is an unintelligible allegory, written with much linguistic knowledge and learning in Latinized Italian, Greek and Hebrew being occasionally interspersed in the text.¹

¹ In the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (iv., 145) there is an account of the literature of the *Hypnerotomachia*. It is exhaustively discussed in "*Ueber den Kunsthistorischen Werth der Hypnerotomachia Poliphili ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Kunstliteratur in der Renaissance*, von Albert Ilg. Wien, 1872." Dr. Ilg wrote his essay as a qualification for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Tübingen, from an examination of the book and its episodes *seriatim*: the essay was reviewed by Mr. Colvin in the "*Academy*" of the 15th October, 1872. In Mr. Symond's "*Renaissance*

The book is dedicated to Duke Guidobaldo of Urbino, and Manutius Aldus was the printer. The cost was defrayed by Leonardo Crasso, a scholar of Verona. The publication would long since have sunk into oblivion but for the engravings it is adorned with. To Mantegna, Benedeto Montagna, Giovanni Bellini, and others, the great painters of the time, these engravings have been attributed.¹ The riddle, however, as to their authorship, remains unsolved, and we must rest contented in regarding them as unsurpassed in excellence by any similar art creation of the time.

The only mark made use of throughout the "Hypnerotomachia" is a small minuscule b on two occasions, at pp. a. 6 rev. and c. 1., identical in form, but somewhat larger than the same letter which appears on so many of the publications of the time, at Venice, commencing with its first introduction in the previously mentioned edition of "Appianus De bellis civilibus Romanorum," of 1477, with the colophon at the end, "Impressum est hoc Venetijs per *Bernardū pictorem* & Erhardum ratdolt de Augusta una cum Petro loslein de Langencen correctore ac socio. Laus Deo. M.CCCC.LXXVII". Amongst other attributions, Radholt's associate, the painter Bernardus, has been named as the

in Italy" (vol. iv., p. 219) a summary of the contents of the Hypnerotomachia is given, with an extremely able and critical disquisition upon the motive and spirit of the composition.

¹ A comparison of the method of execution of the subjects distinguished by Zoan Andrea's initials, in the Giunta Ovid of 1497, with the clever freedom of drawing, but far greater precision of cutting of the illustrations of the Hypnerotomachia, enables us to see how close is the relationship between them, bearing in mind the advanced skill in the use of the burin attained during the two years which had intervened between their publication. The engravings in the Ovid, selected for observation in the account of Zoan Andrea, show how distinct is their resemblance with those in the Hypnerotomachia. The drawing of the figures, and the treatment and fulness of form of the undraped women, are identical in the two volumes, strongly supporting Ottley's judgment (p. 578) "that they were designed and engraved by the same artists."

author of the illustrations of the "*Hypnerotomachia*;" and Dr. Lippmann, in his *Italienische Holzschnitt*, brings forward another claimant to their authorship in Jacobo de' Barbari. The arguments he advances in support of his opinion will be found more fully referred to in the preceding account of Jacobo de' Barbari.

The slight treatment of the vignettes in the Appianus, the Mallermi Bible, the editions of Dante, Boccaccio, and Livy, and other contemporary volumes marked with the small minuscule b, varies considerably from the bold vigorous drawing, uniform throughout, which we see in the *Hypnerotomachia*, and in the cuts supplied by Zoan Andrea for the Ovid of 1497.

M. Piot contributed an article to the "*Cabinet de l'Amateur*" for the years 1861-2 (p. 353), to prove that an artist, "*Le Maître aux dauphins*, was the master of the designs of the '*Hypnerotomachia*,' which it has been desired to give to Raphael and Giovanni Bellini, and of those of the '*Fasciculus medicine*' of Jean de Ketham, attempted to be attributed to Andrea Mantegna. But at the present day we must altogether renounce such uncritical hypotheses. It is to him (the master of the dolphin) we are indebted for the illustrations of the '*Metamorphoses*' of Ovid, the '*Theatre*' of Terence, and of Plautus, the '*Fables*' of Æsop, of the first illustrated Vitruvius edited by Giovanni Giocondo, and numerous other books, published from 1491 to 1520, by Luca Antonio Giunta, Gregorio de Gregoriis, Aldus Manutius, Lorenzo Soardis, Arrivabene, &c. &c. By him these celebrated printers were supplied with frontispieces, ornamented letters, and typographical devices, from the Aldine anchor in its primitive simplicity, to the superb device on the title of the '*Enneades*' of Marc-Antonio Sabellico of 1498."

V^{te}. Delaborde remarks, in his "*Gravure en Italie*" (p. 234, note 3), that "the dolphin is found on the bas-reliefs of the fifteenth century, in miniatures, in gold-

smiths' work, and the adornment of furniture of the same period, and that consequently he cannot concur in the attempt at classification made by M. Piot of the Venetian engravings." The dolphin, as an adjunct in ornamentation, was, in fact, from a very early period, so generally adopted throughout Italy, in imitation of its use in ancient art, that it is impossible to designate any particular locality or class of artists as distinguished by the appropriation of it. It is introduced in several of the books published at the end of the fifteenth century at Florence, as well as at Venice, the frontispiece to the "*Epistole ⁊ Evangelii ⁊ Lectioni vulgari in lingua toschana*", Firenze, 1495, previously described amongst the Florence books, being one of the most conspicuous examples of the successful use of the dolphin for decorative design.

With the exception of the period, ranging between the years 1490 and 1510, during which the volumes we have given account of were published at Florence, Venice continued to be the great emporium for the production of the illustrated literature of the time, and the painter-engraver's art became largely developed in the city, in its application for the embellishment of the numerous books which were there printed. The choicest specimens of their workmanship are, for the most part, in simple outline, and extreme delicacy of drawing is the prevailing character of their execution.

In the last year of the century, a small 4to was published, "*Epistole evangelii vulgar historiade—Venegia per maestro Pietro da Pavia nel Anno mcccc adi xxi di Luio*". Numerous vignettes in outline of New Testament History are interspersed throughout the volume, similar to the cuts in the Mallermi Bible, but varied in their treatment, the heads, and expression of the faces, being somewhat of the type of the figures in the Bonsignore Ovid. They are sharp and clear in their cutting, and three of them are marked with the letter N. An arabesque border surrounds

the first page of the text on b. 11, having a representation in the centre, of Our Saviour holding His cross, seated as Judge in a radiant glory, the blessed, with "ABEL" bearing an inscribed pennon, being on the left, and the condemned with "CAIN", also bearing a similar pennon, being on the right.

In the same year, an edition of the "*Fior di virtu*" was printed, with an impression on the title-page from the block of the monk gathering flowers in the garden of his monastery, which was originally engraved for the edition issued in Venice in 1492 by Matheo da Parma. On the title-page of the volume of 1492 there is the inscription "QVESTA SIE VNA VTILISSIMA OPERETA ACADVN FIDEL CHRISTIANO CHIAMATA FIOR DI VIRTU—LAUS DEO DIO—SEMPER PADRE". The book was reprinted at Florence in 1498, with the same frontispiece: an account of this reprint is given amongst the Florence books (p. 165). In the present edition a different inscription is substituted on the title-page, engraved in Gothic letter, "*Fior de virtu . utilissimo Acaduno Fidel Christiano*", and numerous small vignettes are printed with the text, extremely clever in their drawing, and in the spirited treatment of the animals and figures introduced in the delineation of the tales and proverbs: there is no mark upon any of them. The following colophon is inserted on the last leaf at the head of the list of contents of the volume: "*Imp̄ssa i Venetia p̄ xpofolo nel mcccc adi xxiiii Aprile*".¹

At the time of the publication of the *Bonsignore* Ovid, a demand had arisen for Church-service books and manuals of Christian prayer and devotion, printed and ornamented with illustrations, in the manner of the illuminated MSS. previously in use. During the first quarter of the sixteenth

¹ The "*Fior di virtu*" was written by Tomaso Leoni in 1320, and passed through numerous editions, of which the one issued by Matheo da Parma in 1492 was the first that was illustrated. There are translations of it into English, the earliest of them being by T. Colwell. 8vo. London [1565].

century, which is beyond the range of our inquiry, numerous theological volumes, distinguished by the excellence of their type, and the richness of their decoration, were published at Venice. Important amongst them is an edition of the *Lives of the Fathers*,¹ distinctive in character from any other contemporary work, and we conclude our notice of the Venice books with an account of it: "*Vita di Sancti Padri vulgā historiada, con Gratia et Privilegio—Impressum Venetiis per Otinum Da Pavia De la Luna. Anno dñi. mccccci. Adi. xxviii. Luio.*". The description is taken from a copy in the writer's possession. The text is in the Italian vulgate, printed in a fine bold Roman type: errors occur in the setting-up and the pagination, which the "registrum" on the recto of the last leaf enables us to collate. The volume is ornamented with arabesque borders on many of the pages, similar to those of the Naples *Æsop* of 1485, and the Venice *Herodotus* of 1494. They vary from them in the backgrounds being worked in the "criblée" manner, and numerous smaller blocks of figure subjects similarly treated are at the headings of the text. A floreated margin, white upon a black ground, surrounds the title-page, and the ornamentation of the inner portion of the upper part of it printed in red, consists of a circle, with branches of leaves at the corners, the middle of the circle being occupied by two triangles brought to a point in the centre. The monogram "ND" is in the upper triangle, and "F" in the one below; and from the foot-line of the lower triangle an oblong tablet is suspended, having inscribed upon it, in white letters upon a red ground, "SOLI . DEO . ONOR . ET . GLORIA." "*Vita di Sancti Padri vulgā historiada,*" printed in red letter, is in the inner space of the lower half of the title.

¹ The interest in the volume is enhanced through the use subsequently made by the engraver Marcantonio Raimondi of the device and monograms on the title, in introducing them in his copy (B. xiv., 637) of the Albert Dürer woodcut of the Adoration of the Madonna.

The scenes in the Lives of the Saints, represented in circles half the size of the page, at the commencement, and in some instances at the conclusion of each history, very spirited and original in their drawing, were engraved on wood blocks, somewhat rude, but highly artistic in their cutting; the lines of the shadow introduced are varied in direction, no cross-hatching being used. The personal acquaintance made by the Saints and Anchorites with the evil one, in their trials and temptations, is a favourite subject of the artist, in the incidents selected for illustration, the expressiveness of their treatment bespeaking the earnestness of his belief in their reality.

In the story of S. Evagarius (fo. 65), a disciple of S. Basil, "*temptato de una zintildōna de lui innamorato*," the Saint is represented bald-headed, and very lean of body, furtively looking from behind his hand upheld before his face, at a lady of colossal proportions, but perfect symmetry of form, who stands undraped before him. On the opposite side of the scene the Saint is again represented upon his knees on the ground, with a frightful-looking devil on his back, smiting him on his bald head with a stone, for the conduct he had been guilty of. In a subsequent representation (fo. 181) a painter, whose name is not given, is upon a scaffold against a wall, with his pallet and brushes, in front of a group of the Madonna with the Infant Saviour he is engaged in painting. A savage demon clutches him on the shoulder, pulling him back, to throw him from the scaffold; but the hand of the Madonna has started from the picture, and seized him by the wrist, to save him from the fall. The story told in the text is that a painter depicted a beautiful figure of the glorious Virgin Mary in a church: the demon came and asked why he painted these things so beautiful but him so vile. Because, replied the painter, the Madonna is more beautiful and more glorious than any thing in heaven or earth, and you are the most brutal and most infamous beast that can be found or imagined. Whereupon the

enraged demon wished to throw him down in order to kill him ; but the figure of Our Lady, whom he had painted so beautifully, stretched out its hand and held him, saving him from falling, and the demon suddenly disappeared with a loud noise. Wherefore the painter gave great thanks to the most glorious Virgin Mary, who is ever to be praised and glorified.

At the head of the first "tabula" of contents, at the end of the volume, there is a circle, within a square border, similar in form to the other woodcuts, wherein stands S. Jerome barefooted, the lion being behind him, offering with either hand an open book, inscribed "Vita patrum," to four bare-headed monks on the left, and to four nuns on the right ; and at the head of the second "tabula," in a similar circle, stands "S. NICOLA DE TOLENTINO", with a large flamboyant sun on his breast, looking forward, holding a crucifix in his right hand, and a lily branch in the left, with an open book, inscribed "PRECEPTA PATRIS AVGVSTINI SERVAVI". An angel is in the air on either side bearing a crown, a third crown being in the centre above the Saint's head. On the reverse of the last leaf are two winged children standing at the sides of a blank shield propped on the ground, surmounted by a crescent moon. At the bottom of the page is printed, "Finisse. La Vita. de Sancti Padri novamenTe sTampada. e diligentemente coreta. con. algune zonte. necesarie."





CHAPTER XXII.

DONATO BRAMANTE. ANDREA VERROCCHIO.

THE Accademia at Milan, which became so celebrated through Leonardo da Vinci's association with it, was founded in the last quarter of the fifteenth century by Lodovico Sforza, as one of the measures, amongst the many he adopted, to popularize the tenure of the Regency he had usurped. The schools that were instituted became celebrated from the learning of the professors who directed them, and the extensive works in progress for the improvement of the buildings of the city attracted architects, painters, and sculptors to reside within its walls. The printers, who set up their presses under the patronage of the Sforzas, became renowned for the beauty of the type they employed; noticeable amongst the volumes they issued was the first Greek book, the grammar of Constantine Lascaris, published in 1476, and the narrative of the transactions of the Sforzas, in the folio volume by Johannes Simoneta dedicated to Lodovico Sforza, "*De rebus gestis Francisci Sphortiae—Antonius Zarotus impressit Mediolani Decimo Kalendas Februarias 1479.*"

DONATO BRAMANTE.

We have an early record of the practice of engraving in Milan, in a rare architectural print, associated, from the inscription "BRAMANTVS FECIT IN MLO" on the face of it, with the architect Donato Bramante. The print has narrowly escaped destruction, there being only two known impressions extant; one, in the British Museum, acquired with Dr. Monro's collection, was described, whilst in that gentleman's possession, by Strutt in his "Biographical Dictionary;" the other, of which an account is given by Zani in his "Materiali" (p. 55), belonged to Signor Perego of Milan, where for many years it was well known, from its being exhibited in one of the rooms of his house.

Donato Bramante (Lazzari) was born at Castel Durante near Urbino, in 1444, in supposed relationship with the family of Raphael Sanzio; his early years were passed in the study of painting, and throughout life he occasionally was engaged in the practice of it. We first hear of him in Faenza, where there is the tradition that in 1474 he was commissioned by the municipality to decorate in fresco some of the town buildings: there are fragments of other similar works considered to have been executed by him in 1486 whilst he was living at Bergamo. Scarcely any knowledge however is extant of Bramante's antecedents prior to his residence in Milan, in 1487, where he had the conduct of the various architectural works then in progress in the city. In 1488 he was at Pavia, superintending the construction of the Duomo, and the buildings in the Northern cities of Italy he is known to have been the architect of, show the repute he had attained in the new profession he had adopted. In 1491 he had completed the Sacristy of San Satiro at Milan and was employed by Lodovico Sforza in the enlargement of the cathedral, and the extensive works connected with it. He is said to have painted the frescoes

on the outside walls of several houses in Milan, and similar decorative works were undertaken by him for Alexander VI. at Rome : but the only recognized frescoes by his hand which are extant, now rapidly falling to decay, are those of the Prinetti Palace at Milan.

On the dispersion of the Court at Milan, in 1499, Bramante became permanently settled at Rome, and Julius II., on his succeeding to the Papacy in 1503, committed to him the conduct of the vast additions to St. Peter's he contemplated the construction of. Michelangelo, although jealous of his successful rival, pronounced that no architect of modern times had surpassed Bramante in scientific knowledge ; Bramante's plans for St. Peter's were, in fact, of colossal extent, and had to be materially modified, being of far greater magnitude than the designs which, subsequently, were proceeded with by Michelangelo. Amongst the architectural subjects engraved by Agostino Veneziano is one of St. Peter's, inscribed "*Templi Petri instauracio MCCCCVI.*" (B. xiv., 534), which is said to be from a design by Bramante for the proposed elevation of the cathedral. The charges brought against him of inefficiency and ignorance of the principles of structural solidity, arose from the haste insisted upon by the Pope in the creation of the new Basilica, workmen being employed day and night, without intermission, to hurry forward the completion of the building ; from the almost impracticable nature of the ground the massive piers were placed in, the foundations for their support proved to be insecure, and much of the work had to be renewed. The death of Julius II. in February, 1513, did not interfere with the progress of the building ; but in the following year, on the 11th of March, the architect, whose health had for some months previously been failing, followed his patron, and Raphael was appointed his successor.

Of the prints ascribed to Bramante, the one we have referred to alone has any claim to be considered as engraved

by him. The others are of later date, and have been classed under his name from the inscription "BRAMANTI ARCHITECTI OPVS" upon the second in Passavant's list (P. v., 178, 2), and from the buildings represented being similar to known edifices he was the architect of.

Two notices of Bramante were published in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" in 1874 (vol. x., 2nd period), the one by M. Courajod in September (p. 254), accompanied by reduced fac-similes of the engravings attributed to him, and the other by M. Henry de Geymüller, in October (p. 379) in the same year, with a detailed account of the print first mentioned, accompanied by particulars of the churches in Milan of Bramante's construction it is in accord with, specifying points of resemblance with the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie and the sacristy of San Satiro, and the Canonica of Sant' Ambrogio: no trace is perceptible, in the impression in the British Museum, of the date attempted to be deciphered by Passavant. The correctness of the ascription to Bramante, even of the first-named print, is questioned by the Marquis d'Adda, in his *Essay upon Leonardo da Vinci* in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" for August, 1868 (xxv., p. 129), where he expresses the opinion that it was engraved by some clever scholar of Andrea Mantegna, rather than by Bramante, with the problematical statement that the inscription "BRAMANTVS . FECIT . IN . MLO." bears no relation to the engraver, and was merely inserted for the purpose of explaining that Bramante was the architect of the buildings represented: with very general consent, however, the print is pronounced to be by the hand of Bramante.

ANDREA VERROCCHIO.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the schools of Milan, and the important position assumed by the Accademia, which was placed under Leonardo da Vinci's direc-

tion on his arrival in the city, we have first to direct our attention to Andrea Verrocchio, in whose studio the days of Leonardo's youth were passed, and from whose teaching the skill he attained in painting was acquired.

Andrea, a member of the family of the Cioni in Florence, was born in the city in 1435 (Vasari, iii., 358, note by Cav. Milanesi), and, having been apprenticed to a goldsmith Verrocchio, he assumed his name. He became, as it is recorded, one of the most accomplished artists of his time:—goldsmith, painter, architect, and sculptor, and a skilled musician, learned moreover in languages and classical knowledge, he was a fitting instructor of his two scholars, Leonardo da Vinci and Lorenzo di Credi, who both subsequently became so eminent. Their indebtedness to him for his teaching, and the exactitude wherewith they followed his precepts, are shown in the difficulty to solve a frequently recurring subject of discussion, by which of the three many of their drawings handed down to us were executed. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle instance a silver-point sketch of a horse in the Louvre, bearing all the character of Leonardo's manner, save that as a design for Verrocchio's statue of Coleoni, it is evidently by the hand of his master.

The only authentic picture by Verrocchio is of the Baptism of Our Saviour, in the Accademia at Florence; the Saviour stands in the stream of the Jordan, remarkable in His look of grave solemnity, amidst the thick mass of waving hair falling over His shoulders. His head is inclined towards S. John on the bank at the side, whose arm is upraised, pouring the water over the Saviour's head from the chalice in his hand: the earnestness of S. John's action, in the fulfilment of the sacred office he is engaged in, relieves the wan severity of feature he is drawn with. Two angel children kneel on the bank, at the left,—one, with his calm handsome face, characteristic of Verrocchio's thoughtfulness of manner; the bright smiling profile of the other,

and the full curls of hair clustered down his back, sustain the correctness of the legend that Leonardo da Vinci was entrusted to paint it. The realistic truthfulness of the whole composition is premonitive of the development, under the master's guidance, which so speedily resulted in the works of his talented pupil.

Of pictures ascribed to Verrocchio, there is in the Berlin Museum a Madonna holding the Infant Saviour on her knee, who caresses the child S. John, and a similar group is in the Dresden Gallery, both of them, according to Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, by Lorenzo di Credi.

M. Paul Durrieu contributed to the French periodical "*L'Art*," in March, 1883, an article respecting "*Un tableau de l'atelier de Verrocchio au Musée du Louvre*." The Madonna, holding the Infant Saviour, in a radiant aureole surrounded by cherubim, occupies the centre of the composition, S. Bernard attended by angels being on the right, and the Magdalene on the left: the main interest in the picture arises from the pen studies for it by Verrocchio which are extant. Fac-similes of the picture, and of these studies for it by Verrocchio of the Madonna and Child, one belonging to the Duke d'Aumale, and another to the *His de la Salle* collection in the Louvre, are printed with the text.

Verrocchio's statue of David in the Uffizi, and his bronze group of Our Saviour and S. Thomas in Orsanmichele, are distinguished amongst the noble products of the sculptor's art the city of Florence is adorned with.

In 1488 Verrocchio had been induced to return to Venice, to finish for the Seigniory the equestrian statue of their great general, Bartolomeo Coleoni.¹ The model

¹ Bartolomeo Coleoni, born in the neighbourhood of Bergamo in 1400, was the last of his family, which had been exterminated in the wars of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. He went to Naples in his eighteenth year, and, having attracted attention as an athlete by his great strength and skill, he became a favourite of Queen Jeanne the Second. Dissatisfied with his position, he made his escape, and enlisted with Braccio di Mon-

had been set up on its pedestal, when Verrocchio was attacked with cold, from exposure, whilst superintending the preparations for the casting, and died, after a few days' illness, in Venice, in his fifty-sixth year, the work being left to others to carry to completion.

It is only in recent years that Verrocchio's name has been mentioned in association with engraving, which was in full activity when he was at the zenith of his artistic power in Florence, and Leonardo da Vinci was a pupil in his school. Educated as a goldsmith, he became one of the most accomplished metal-chasers of his time: in the first volume of Gaye's "*Carteggio*" we have an account of the costly plate of his making the churches of Florence were furnished with. The designation of *intagliatore* given to Verrocchio by Vasari, is adduced in support of his title to be included amongst the painter-engravers of the fifteenth century.

Passavant (v., 52) ascribes three prints to Verrocchio: one of a fantastic sketch of an old man, similar to the numerous grotesques attributed, with somewhat doubtful correctness, to Leonardo; and another of a study of three horses' heads, bearing distinct evidence of its being by the hand of Leonardo da Vinci, to whom, therefore, the print has been transferred in the British Museum collection. The first print in Passavant's list has far higher claim to be regarded as the work of Verrocchio: it is a portrait, approaching life size, of a Florentine lady, matronly in appearance, seen nearly to the waist, looking forward turned towards the right; her richly brocaded dress, looped over the right shoulder, is held together by the left hand under her breast; a large

tone, the governor of the Abruzzi. After various changes, having at one time been in the service of Francesco Sforza, he attained distinction under the Venetian Republic, and in 1454 was appointed commander-in-chief of its armies. On his death in 1476, he bequeathed a considerable sum to the city of Venice, upon condition that his equestrian statue should be set up in the place of St. Mark.

jewel in plain setting hangs in front, and a similar ornament is on her forehead, suspended by a fillet passed round her hair, which falls in spiral ringlets by the side of either cheek : two impressions only of the print are known, one in the British Museum, and the other in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris.

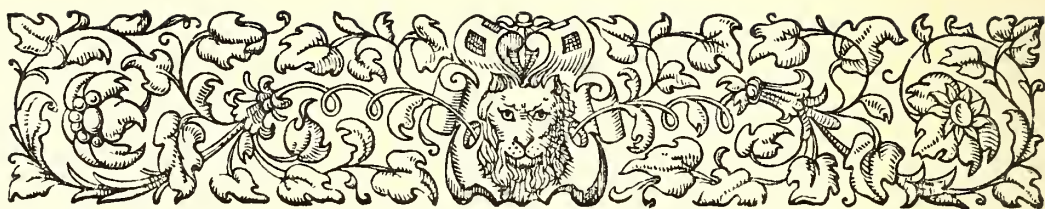
Vasari states, in his life of Verrocchio, that, in a book he had of several of his drawings, there were "certain female heads, of which the features, expression, and arrangement of the hair, were constantly imitated, for their exceeding beauty, by Leonardo da Vinci;" and that he had, besides, "two horses with the measurements and the proportions, according to which they are to be increased from a smaller to a larger size." This last remark of Vasari evidently occasioned the attribution by Passavant to Verrocchio of the print of three horses' heads by Leonardo da Vinci, from one of the heads having geometrical lines ruled across it.

The Marquis d'Adda, in his essay, "Leonard de Vinci : La Gravure Milanaise et Passavant" in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" (xxv., 149), refers to Passavant's description of the portrait of the Florentine lady, and states that he "does not thoroughly share his enthusiasm for this interesting, but not very agreeable print. There is nothing *leonardesque* in its hard profile and haggard eyes; the costume is clearly that of the Florentine ladies of the commencement of the sixteenth century." The Marquis adds that, his inclination is to regard it as by Giacomo Francia, after, either a fresco by Ghirlandaio, or a portrait by Francesco Francia, but certainly not by Leonardo. V^{te}. Delaborde, in his "Gravure en Italie" (p. 188), writes of the print, that it recalls the portrait of Lucrezia Crivelli, mistress of Lodovico Sforza, ascribed to Leonardo as having been painted at Milan about 1497, which is now in the Museum of the Louvre; adding in a note, that the artist who made the design, presumably was the engraver of it, and that he

could not admit, with Passavant, the hand was that of Andrea Verrocchio.

In the British Museum the portrait is placed amongst the anonymous Italian prints of the fifteenth century ; it is of Florentine workmanship, of the early days, when the technical skill in the use of the burin was in its transition state of being brought into exercise by the painters of the time. Finished in minute cross-hatching, with careful exactness, the method of cutting is distinctly at variance with that employed in the school at Bologna, refuting the correctness of the ascription which has been made of the print to Francesco Francia, or his son. There is a stolid, impassive look in the face, which Leonardo da Vinci, to whom likewise the print has been attributed, never would have left upon it, and the date is clearly antecedent to the production of the two animated lifelike female portraits, engraved by Leonardo whilst at Milan. Much of the deficiency of expression, which falls short of the refinement Verrocchio's drawings of female portraiture were eminent for, is evidently due to the hesitation, as to the result to be derived from this, the first known attempt to obtain from the metal a portrait so large in size : the careful attention to each detail of the work creates the monotony of look of the inanimate features, which recall nevertheless the reflectiveness of the master's drawing : the print has far higher claim to be regarded as of the workmanship of Verrocchio, than of any other Florentine artist of the time.





CHAPTER XXIII.

LEONARDO DA VINCI.



LEONARDO, the natural son of Piero d'Antonio da Vinci,¹ was born in 1452, on an estate belonging to his father in the valley of the Arno, where the years of his boyhood were passed, and his skill in manly exercise, and his knowledge of animals and country life and pursuits, were acquired. His father held the appointment of notary to the Seigniorship of Florence, and on the son's introduction into the city, the talent he evinced procured him ready admission to the studio of his father's friend, Andrea Verrocchio, whose pupil he became ; in 1472, Leonardo's name was entered in the book of the Company of painters at Florence. A problematical record of these early days, is the representation of a Medusa, preserved in the Uffizi, as having been painted by him for his father ; it is a copy or transcript from an unfinished original, long since lost sight of ; the legend connected with the picture is that, whilst in his country home on the banks of the Arno, he made a collection of snakes, lizards, and other reptiles, and utilized them for study in delineating it.

Leonardo remained a pupil of Verrocchio up to 1477,

¹ His mother's name was Caterina ; she was a peasant's daughter on his father's estate, and shortly after Leonardo's birth, married in her own rank of life.

and is supposed, as previously mentioned, to have aided his master in his picture of the Baptism of Our Saviour, one of the angels on the left, and portions of the figure of Our Saviour, and of the landscape, being considered to be by the hand of Leonardo, an opinion corroborated, according to Dr. Richter, through their being painted in oil, a medium Verrocchio never made use of. Two only of Leonardo's paintings of this period have been recognized, both in brown monochrome:—an Adoration of the Kings, in the Uffizi, and a S. Jerome, in the Vatican galleries; in the Windsor collection there are some studies for the latter picture.

Leonardo's mastery of all the accomplishments of the time, his power of song, and the originality of composition in music he is said to have been endowed with, must have given him ready access to the society of Florence during the ten years that were passed there; and his acquaintance with mathematics and science, wherein he attained such great proficiency, shows that his time was not idly wasted. His practical knowledge of anatomy¹ is seen in the drawings in the Windsor collection.

A red chalk drawing by Leonardo's hand, now in the Accademia at Turin, is stated by Dr. Richter in his life of the artist (p. 107), to be the only authentic portrait of him: it is the head of an old man of handsome countenance, expressive of suffering, with wavy hair falling away from his forehead, mingling with the long beard. Another profile of Leonardo, also in red chalk, is in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. We learn from Vasari's memoir, written about thirty years after Leonardo's death, that he was very handsome of person. Paolo Giovio, the historian of Como, whose biography of Leonardo preceded that of Vasari,

¹ William Hunter, the eminent English surgeon, remarked, "I am fully persuaded Leonardo was the best anatomist at that time in the world."

describes him as “of an extremely kind and generous disposition, of most striking appearance, with fine features. That he was possessed of consummate taste, and had also a special talent for entertaining, which he notably displayed in the conduct of theatrical performances. He also sang well to the lute, and was readily welcomed as a companion of princes.” And a MS. by an unknown author, preserved in the Magliabechian Library at Florence, contains a short biography, still earlier in date, wherein we are informed that “his figure was beautifully proportioned, and he had a noble and engaging presence. He usually wore a rose-coloured coat reaching to the knee, and long hose, as was the fashion at that time: his carefully-combed hair fell in luxuriant curls as far as his waist.”

Of the years of Leonardo's early manhood but slight mention has come down to us: engineering and fortification formed an important branch of his numerous studies, referred to in his well-known letter to Lodovico Sforza, of which a copy is preserved in the Ambrosian Library. The letter bears no date, but must have been written prior to his first journey to Milan in 1482, as the anonymous biographer before referred to states that he was thirty years old when he was sent by Lorenzo the Magnificent to take a lute to the Duke of Milan,—the marvellous silver lute in the form of a horse's head, frequently referred to in the memoirs of his life: the quaintness of it, and his rich costume, and his courtly qualifications, were brought into requisition in the conduct of the festivities at the palace; but the marriage of Gian Galeazzo, born on the 20th of June, 1469, could not have been the occasion, as suggested, for the visit, the young Duke in 1482 being but thirteen years of age, and his marriage with Isabella of Aragon, daughter of the King of Naples, did not take place until seven years later. The description of the costly dresses, with the pomp of the bridal escort, and the lavish outlay upon the ceremonial of the marriage,

which Leonardo had the conduct of, on its taking place in 1489, is an interesting record of the profuse expenditure of the princes of the time; Leonardo was endowed with all the experience essential for directing the pageants and tournaments which, in endless variety of costume, were instituted: particulars of the allegorical divertissements they were accompanied with, are given in the "Sonetti" of Belinzona, printed at Milan in 1493. The taste for luxury and extravagance of living, which at the end of the fifteenth century spread so rapidly throughout the cities of Italy, was carried to an excess at the Court at Milan, in the efforts of Lodovico Sforza to distract attention from his precarious title to the dominion he had assumed the command of.

Other visits were paid by Leonardo to Milan, resulting in his being received into the Regent's service, in 1483 or in the spring of 1484, with a salary of 300 scudi. On his entering upon his engagement, which evidently had been to a great extent brought about by the concluding paragraph in the letter—"I can carry out sculpture in marble, bronze, or clay, and also in painting, whatever is to be done, and as well as any other, be he whom he may: again, the bronze horse may be taken in hand, which is to be to the immortal glory and eternal honour of the prince your father of happy memory, and of the illustrious house of Sforza"—preparations were at once commenced for proceeding with the statue.

The date of Leonardo's taking up his residence in Milan receives confirmation from Sabbà da Castaglione's mention of the treatment by the French of the model of the statue, on their entry into the city in 1499 (Ricardi, p. 109), where he remarks, that Leonardo had devoted fully sixteen years to the work: "*La forma del cavallo, intorno a cui Leonardo avea sedici (16) anni continui consumati.*"

Lodovico Sforza at an early date of his assumption of the government, revived the project, started by his brother Galeazzo Maria, for the erection of a monument to the

memory of their father Francesco, by whom some thirty years previously the dynasty had been founded, and the artists were invited to enter into competition for the work.

In the Royal collection at Munich there is a drawing, much injured, of an equestrian statue of a fighting warrior, recognized, from its correspondence with the likeness on his medals, as a portrait of Francesco Sforza. M. Louis Courajod published an account of the drawing in the "*Gazette des Beaux Arts*" (xvi., 2nd period, 422), in which he attributed it to the school of Leonardo da Vinci. Signor Morelli, in his "*Italian Masters in German Galleries*" (pp. 90-97), discusses at some length the question as to the authorship of the drawing, which he pronounces to be by Antonio del Pollajuolo: in the preceding notice of Pollajuolo (p. 121) some of the arguments for Signor Morelli's judgment are quoted. The drawing, instead of being a preliminary sketch for the work, bears every appearance that it was made from the model for the statue, when it was set up in 1494, in its accepted state of completion for the casting to be proceeded with; considerable injury has happened to the paper, and the lower portion, with the pedestal the group was placed upon, has been torn away.

The contents of Leonardo's letter to Lodovico Sforza tell us how his thoughts were occupied with the competition for the commission for the statue, before he quitted Florence. At the commencement of the second volume of Dr. Richter's "*Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*" (1883), he prints from the different MSS. all the extracts he could find relating to the statue, the detail of the items of cost of one projected to Messer Gioanne Jacomo da Trevulzo being amongst them, and Dr. Richter gives facsimiles of the various sketches and designs which are extant, all, with two exceptions, in the Royal collection at Windsor. The statue was evidently intended to be modelled with the horse's fore-legs upreared, sustained by a prostrate foe beneath; we see this in the Windsor drawings, and in

the drawing at Munich. The same attitude prevails in the unique print by Leonardo of four equestrian studies, containing some of his first thoughts and sketches for the statue: from the date at which the print must have been produced, the knowledge of engraving evidently had been acquired by Leonardo previous to his leaving Florence, and speedily after the foundation of the Accademia, the practice of it was brought into operation in Milan. We have the further confirmation of its early exercise by Leonardo, in the use he made of an impression of his print of three horses' heads, in dividing and arranging them amongst his preliminary drawings for the statue, which are in the manuscript volume at Windsor.

Amongst the seven nielli preserved in the National Museum at Florence, there is a small circular niellated silver plate, by an unknown artist, mentioned in the preceding account of the nielli, with a border around it, bearing the inscription: "FRANCISCVS SFORCI . VICECOMES . DUX . MEDIOLANI . BELICE . GLORIE . SPLENDOR . SEMPER." The sentiment of this inscription is in close agreement with the language of Leonardo's letter to Lodovico Sforza. An equestrian figure of the Duke on horseback, holding his bâton, occupies the centre of the plate; the *biscia* of the Visconti, adopted as a crest by the Sforzas, is at the top, and again between the horse's legs. The niello, from its relationship with Leonardo's first ideas connected with the contemplated statue, must have been executed previous to his departure for Milan: it is of Florentine workmanship, of an early date, before the upreared position of the horse's fore-legs, with the prostrate foe beneath to support them, was thought of.

Francesco Sforza was the most powerful condottiere of his time, and on his return to Milan in 1450, early in the year, from a successful campaign against the Venetians, he entered the city as its ruler, and in the March ensuing was proclaimed duke. He had in 1441 married Bianca Maria,

the only child of Duke Filippo Maria Visconti, his illegitimate daughter by Agnese del Maino. The duke died in 1447 leaving no heir, and Francesco Sforza's claim to the succession was better founded than that of any other competitor.¹ The sixteen years of his reign materially advanced the commercial prosperity and power of the city. The revenue of the state had been brought to a position of great productiveness, through the organization of its finances introduced by Gian Galeazzo Visconti, and Francesco Sforza applied the wealth at his command in various works of public improvement. The peace he had concluded with the Venetians remained undisturbed for many years, and during his judicious administration the building of the cathedral was proceeded with: he undertook the cutting of a navigable canal, communicating with the Adda, and built the great hospital, Ospedale Maggiore, which is a record of his wise and provident government.

Lodovico, the second son of Francesco Sforza, had, on

¹ The Visconti had governed the principality for nearly two hundred years, and their history, amidst all the splendour of their powerful rule, is a dismal record of murder and violence. Gian Galeazzo, who reigned from 1385 to 1402, made some amends for the unscrupulous tyranny wherewith his life was stigmatized, by leaving the revenue of the country in a highly prosperous condition. In May, 1395, he purchased of the Emperor Wenceslas the grant of the dukedom, and in September following he was crowned in Milan with great magnificence. To commemorate his coronation, he commenced the present structure of the cathedral, and as an atonement for his treatment of his predecessor, his uncle and his father-in-law, Bernabo Visconti, whom he imprisoned and put to death in the castle of Trezzo, he, in September, 1396, founded one of the most exquisite buildings in Italy, the monastery of the Certosa at Pavia, which had made rapid progress towards completion at the time of his death. In 1402 he was waiting for the surrender of Florence, which was besieged by his general Alberico, to declare himself King of Italy, when he was seized with the plague, and in the month of September in that year he died in the castle of Marignano. Succeeded by his sons Giovanni Maria and Filippo Maria, who both died without leaving legitimate issue, on the death of the latter at Milan in 1447, after a reign of thirty-five years, the race of the Visconti came to an end.

the unexpected death of his elder brother, taken possession of the dominion of Milan. The firm position, attained by the father in the hearts of the Milanese, had been seriously shaken through the dissolute and wicked rule of his eldest son, Galeazzo Maria, who succeeded him; and when that son, on the 26th December, 1476, was struck dead, as he entered the church of San Stefano, by the young nobles whom he had outraged, his brother Lodovico, after a temporary banishment, returned to the city, and superseded the murdered duke's widow in the government, consigning her and her son, the young Duke Gian Galeazzo Maria, to comparative imprisonment, which the youth, some years later, in 1494, became released from, as was generally supposed, by poison.

At the time when Leonardo da Vinci joined the Court at Milan, Lodovico Sforza was engaged in the critical effort of establishing himself in the regency he had usurped, and was in need of all the services his correspondent, in his letter, expressed himself capable of rendering. He had gathered around him many of the learned men of his time, and was unremitting in his endeavours to enhance the security of his position, by the cultivation of art and literature, and the encouragement of their professors, continuing the works of improvement of the buildings of the city, by which, amongst his numerous claims to the esteem he was held in, his father had ingratiated himself with his subjects. C. G. Ratti, in his lives of the Genoese artists, called Lodovico the Pericles of Milan; and in the Ambrosian library there is a manuscript of Bernardino Arluno, describing the luxurious court Lodovico Sforza was surrounded with, and the fêtes and festivals wherewith the city was kept in a constant state of excitement.

The equestrian statue of their former ruler was the popular work the attention of men's minds was attracted to, and Leonardo was the artist especially fitted to undertake its construction. It was the prevalent method for the recogni-

tion of the services of the great captains of the time, and Leonardo's energies were instigated to produce a work, in emulation of the statue of Gattamelata, by Donatello, at Padua, and of that of Bartolomeo Colleoni, by Verrocchio, at Venice.

The preparation for casting the statue rapidly proceeded; amongst Leonardo's numerous drawings which have been preserved, and the prints of studies of horses, we have the memorials of the progress of the work: the model was set up and exhibited in the Piazza d'armi on a triumphal arch, before the palace, on the occasion of the marriage, in 1494, of the Emperor¹ Maximilian with Bianca Maria, the niece of Lodovico Sforza. The statue, described by Paciolo in his "*Trattato della divina proportion*" as of the colossal height of twenty-six feet, never was finished, owing to the difficulty of providing the hundred thousand pounds of metal required, and the funds for the attendant expenditure, which the numerous claims upon the Duke's finances prevented him from supplying. On the entry of the French soldiers into Milan in 1499-1500, the model became a target for their arrows: it was still in its place in 1501, as Duke Hercules d'Este, in September of that year, wrote to his representative at Milan to negotiate for the purchase, or for the loan, of it. The application was unsuccessful, and the French soldiery, most probably, soon accomplished its destruction. The desire for its acquisition was owing to a decree of the commune of Ferrara, for the erection in their city of a similar memorial of Duke Hercules, which, like that of the Duke of Milan, was never carried to completion.

Far higher services were rendered by Leonardo during the sixteen years he passed at Milan; he carried out the works for completing the communication with the Adda,

¹ The Emperor Frederic died in the spring of 1493, and Maximilian succeeded his father on the Imperial throne. Bianca Maria, the daughter of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, was the widow of Philibert of Savoy. A portrait of her, ascribed to Leonardo, is in the Brera.

which had been commenced by Francesco Sforza, and his engineering skill was applied in the conduct of extensive drainage operations in the plains of Lombardy, regulating the courses of the rivers, which proved of lasting benefit to the country.

In 1486, Leonardo was commissioned by Lodovico Sforza to decorate the refectory of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie with his famous fresco of the Last Supper, and for ten years and upwards the painting was in progress, being eventually completed in 1498, in which year, Luca Paciolo informs us, the finishing touch was put to it. Bitter must have been the pang experienced by Leonardo, when on the flight of the Duke in August, 1499, the French King Louis XII., and the princes and nobles in his train, stood in admiration before the fresco, and the King expressed his intention, which was found to be impracticable, of removing it to France.

Unfortunately, a new medium Leonardo adopted for fixing his colours, in which oil was used, proved to be a failure, resulting in the rapid decay of the fresco ; the successive repaintings of after years have left scarcely a vestige of the original, beyond its noble composition.

In the Brera there is a fine chalk drawing of the head of Our Saviour ; an interesting sketch in red chalk, in the Accademia at Venice, bears Leonardo's inscription of the names over the heads of the apostles ; separate heads in red crayon are at Windsor, and a sheet of pen sketches is in the Louvre ; memoranda in the artist's writing, respecting the preliminary studies, exist in his MS. in the library of the South Kensington Museum. The fresco was the climax of Leonardo's great power as a painter, according to Dr. Richter, who remarks that his entire artistic career is within the limit of the years of his residence at Milan : other pictures, however, of the highest excellence, were subsequently executed.

When Lodovico Sforza invited Charles VIII., in the

autumn of 1494, to Milan, and procured the French King's recognition of his title to the dukedom he had succeeded to by inheritance, on the death of his nephew in the spring of the same year, the intended advance of the French into Italy had some time previously been decided upon, and, with or without the invitation, the entrance into Milan would certainly have been made; for the Duke, with his exhausted finances, was utterly powerless to stay the invasion, which proved so disastrous in its consequences to the country. During the ensuing year Charles VIII. continued his victorious progress, spreading dismay and confusion amongst the different states, and proceeded from Rome to Naples, of which he assumed the sovereignty, with scarcely an attempt at opposition.

In the autumn of 1495 Charles VIII. fought his way back to France, and during the succeeding three years Lodovico Sforza's right to the dukedom remained undisputed. The King died on the 7th April, 1498, and was succeeded by Louis XII., who, in the following year, revived the claims upon Italy instituted by his predecessor; he crossed the Alps in August, 1499, throwing consternation into the ranks of the Milanese under the command of Galeazzo San Severino, and they dispersed without the offer of battle: the French troops took possession of Milan on the 14th September, and Louis XII. entered the city in triumph on the 6th October; Lodovico Sforza fled in haste with his family, taking refuge, with a considerable treasure, in the Tyrol. Before Christmas, however, Louis XII. went back to France; the Swiss came down from the mountains, and in February, 1500, re-established Lodovico Sforza in the dukedom. But his tenure of it was extremely brief; three months scarcely were over, when the French returned with a replenished army, and besieged Lodovico in Novara. The Swiss mercenaries in the two armies treacherously coalesced, and the town capitulated, the Duke, in an attempted escape, disguised as one of his troopers, being taken prisoner. He

and his family were sent into France, where, after eight years' imprisonment, he died in 1808, in the dungeons of the castle of Loches in Berri, and the Milanese remained subject to France.





CHAPTER XXIV.

LEONARDO DA VINCI (CONTINUED). ENGRAVING
AT MILAN.

FROM Leonardo da Vinci's diaries amongst his MSS., various incidents of his life are gathered; but not a hint is given, either during the ten years of his youth at Florence, or the happy time he passed at Milan, that any tenderer tie than that of friendship resulted from his great personal attractions, or the fine vestments he took such pleasure in wearing. The only pictured likenesses we have the mention of his painting at Milan, of the Duke's mistresses Lucrezia Crivelli and Cecilia Gallerani, have disappeared; the latter was in the form of a Madonna holding the Infant Saviour: a portrait, said to be the first of them, is in the galleries of the Louvre. In the Ambrosian Library there are three portraits, considered to be by Leonardo,—of Bianca Maria, daughter of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, who, in 1494, as before mentioned, became the wife of the Emperor Maximilian, and of Lodovico Sforza, and his wife Beatrix d'Este, the two last being described by Kugler as “in the early and rather severer manner of the artist.”

Two engravings in the British Museum, of handsome young women, no other impression of either of them being known, and the Mona Lisa picture, “La Joconde” of the Louvre, are the most reliable examples extant of the great skill in female portraiture Leonardo was possessed of.

In a folio volume, "*De plurimis claris sceletisque mulieribus*," printed at Ferrara in 1497, previously described (p. 267), there is a profile portrait, prefixed to a long memoir, of Damisella, daughter of Giovanni Trivulcio, knight and senator of an illustrious family of Milan: five pages are devoted to a narrative of her learning and piety. M. Piot, in the "*Cabinet de l'Amateur*" (1862-3, p. 131), in a review of the book, accompanied by several fac-similes of its illustrations, the profile in question of Damisella being amongst them, pronounced it to be "without doubt, engraved after a picture or drawing by Leonardo da Vinci. The delicacy of the profile, and the rich elegance of the costume, recall the portrait of Beatrix d'Este, the wife of Lodovico the Moor, preserved amongst the paintings in the Ambrosian library."

Beatrix d'Este, daughter of Duke Hercules, was born on the 29th June, 1475, and on the 29th December, 1490, she was married to Lodovico Sforza.¹ Leonardo da Vinci's talent must have been brought into active requisition, in directing the festivities on the Regent's return to Milan with his bride on the 31st January following, which were carried out on the same scale of magnificence as the solemnization of his nephew's marriage had been conducted with in the preceding year.

A life-size marble bust of Beatrix is in the Louvre, with the inscription on the pedestal, "*DIVAE BEATRICI . D . HERC . F*" (*Ducis Hercules Filia*), which tells us it was sculptured, prior to the marriage, for presentation probably to her future husband. The bust was attributed to Desiderio da Settignano, but recent discovery of his having been buried at Florence in 1463, disproves the correctness of the attribu-

¹ She died in childbirth on the 2nd January, 1497, and was buried in Sta. Maria delle Grazie, in a magnificent tomb, ornamented with her statue and that of Lodovico Sforza. The tomb was broken up and sold in 1564, and the statues were purchased and placed in the Certosa of Pavia, where they now are.

tion. In the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" for October, 1877 (vol. xvi., 2nd period, p. 330), there is a long article by M. Louis Courajod, illustrated with copies,—of the portrait of Beatrix, of a miniature of her in the British Museum, and of the bust,—with the attempt to prove that it was sculptured by Leonardo. A similarity is seen in the features of all the portraits we have named, with which also the style of the profile of *Damisella Trivulcio*, in the Ferrara volume, is somewhat in resemblance.

At an early period of the institution of the *Accademia*, engraving was brought into exercise in Milan. The first detailed account of the prints that were produced, was written by the late Marquis d'Adda in 1868, and published in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" for August in that year (xxv., 123), with the title, "*La Gravure Milanaise et Passavant*," illustrated with numerous fac-similes. The account is directed to the discussion of the important position the art of engraving attained in the *Accademia*.

From no school in Italy were more remarkable specimens of engraving sent forth, than the two female portraits previously mentioned. The first of them, the portrait of a young woman (P. v., 180, 1), which the Marquis d'Adda considered to be that of *Mona Lisa*, formerly belonged to Mr. Wilson, who illustrated the catalogue raisonné of his collection of engravings with a fac-simile of it, and published a letter from Mr. Ottley, expressing the opinion that it "was engraved by the hand of Leonardo da Vinci." The Marquis wrote of the print (p. 139):—"Si jamais Léonard a vraiment gravé sur cuivre, ce délicieux profil est bien de lui. Nous acceptons sans aucune réserve l'opinion émise par Ottley dans sa lettre publiée par Wilson. Tout nous confirme que nous avons sous les yeux un véritable Léonard, jusqu'à l'évidente inexpérience d'un burin qui s'échappe par moments hors de la ligne à tracer. La fermeté des contours, la costume, la coiffure, et surtout l'expression vivante de la physionomie trahissent la griffe du lion." The Marquis adds, in a note,

that there is a drawing in the Ambrosian Library, very similar to the print, the type of "La Joconde" being also still further evident in the drawing.

The second portrait (P. 2), more attractive artistically, bears confirmative proof, in its life-like animation, and the inscription, "ACHA . LE . VI .", at the sides, of its being the work of Leonardo. The features, in the outline of the nose, and the form of the mouth, with the play of the lips, correspond with a crayon sketch by him of a young female head in the Uffizi. The sketch is drawn in the opposite direction, and turned three-quarters to the front, instead of in profile; but there is a strong resemblance between them. The print was unknown to Ottley and the writers preceding him. In the Louvre there is a chalk drawing, considered to be by Leonardo, of a youthful head with the face in profile, somewhat fuller in the chin, the thick curls of hair being surmounted by an ivy wreath, in which also a likeness with the print may be traced. The print varies from the one that was in the Wilson collection, cross-hatching being introduced, which enhances the fulness of tone in the shadows. The Marquis d'Adda, who had not seen the original, formed his opinion, as he tells us, from a photograph which had been sent to him by the authorities of the British Museum: from its especially refined finish and delicacy of burin, he considered the print was much more like the Florentine nielli, and he consequently ascribed it to Verrocchio, the inscription at the sides being disposed of by the suggestion, clearly erroneous, that it was a subsequent addition to the plate.

The impression of this second print, described as being in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris, acquired with the Marolles collection, cannot now be found, and the only known example of it is the one in the British Museum. Passavant, in his account of the two prints (v., 179), the second apparently not having been seen by him, as he calls it a portrait of a young man, expresses doubts of the correctness

of their attribution to Leonardo, simply for the reason that none of the biographers mention his having engraved on copper or wood. Passavant's judgment is prejudiced through his desire to advance his theories, that certain other of the *Accademia* prints, presently to be mentioned, are merely copies from German originals.

V^{te}. Delaborde, in his "Gravure en Italie" (p. 183), remarks upon these engravings of Leonardo: "Other testimony, in an art point of view, can be adduced to establish the right of Leonardo to be included amongst the Italian engravers of the fifteenth century. Who else was capable of tracing on the copper, with that grace and suppleness of design, the bust of 'A young Woman seen in Profile', in the example which formerly belonged to the Wilson collection, and is now preserved in the British Museum? Is it not also natural to think of him, rather than of Verrocchio, Antonio da Brescia, or Mantegna, whose names are often pronounced, when one sees, either in the same collection, or in the portfolios of the National Library at Paris, the three prints, the 'Head of a Young Woman crowned with Ivy,' the 'Three Heads of Horses' engraved on the same plate, and that 'Portrait of an Old Man, in a Cap,' recalling the type of those which the pencil of Leonardo drew. No document, it may be said, confirms their authenticity, and one finds, it is true, neither monogram, date, nor mark to determine the question; but if these material indications are wanting, there are other evidences, leaving no doubt upon the question, consisting in the forms themselves, in the appearance and the mode of execution of the prints we have mentioned. The first especially, that charming female profile, with her hair half plaited, half waving about her head, belonging to the British Museum, seems clearly to reveal to us its origin, and to manifest the hand of the master, with the same certainty as if his signature had been affixed to it."

In the British Museum collection there are fine impres-

sions of three panels of ornament (P. v., 182, 9^a, 9^b, 9^c), of which Vasari writes (iv., 21), "He also wasted much time in designing knotted interlacements of cords ('gruppi di corde'), clearly defined, in which each separate cord can be distinguished from one end to the other, the whole forming a complete circle: one extremely difficult and very beautiful specimen may be seen, engraved with these words in the centre: *Leonardi Vinci Accademia*." The three¹ prints are circular in form, nearly corresponding in size, the designs being drawn with intertwined lines, in geometrical correctness, with great ingenuity of change in their combination. The inscription, 'Accademia Leonardi Vĩci,' is introduced amidst the coils of each pattern, with diversified separation of the letters. Slight sketches for them, and other similar ornaments, occur amongst the different Leonardo MSS.

Various suggestions have been hazarded respecting the purpose they were engraved for, that of patterns for lace or embroidery being adduced as the motive for them, and the Marquis d'Adda, in his "Essai Bibliographique sur les anciens modèles de lingerie de dentelles et de tapisseries" ("Gazette des Beaux Arts," xv., 342; xvii., 421), includes them in his description of similar works, expressing the opinion that they were engraved probably by Leonardo himself. V^{te}. Delaborde, in a note to the passage in his "Gravure en Italie" we have quoted, suggests whether the concluding words of Vasari respecting the "gruppi" do not imply, that one of them at any rate, the most complicated, was engraved by the master. Instead of patterns of embroidery, their destined use seems to have been for some applied ornamentation connected with the *Accademia*. The precision and accuracy of their clever arrangement are strongly confirmatory of the opinion, that Leonardo de-

¹ The Marquis d'Adda in his "Essai" ("Gazette des Beaux Arts," xvii., p. 435), states that four of the prints are in the Ambrosian Library at Milan.

signed, if he did not likewise engrave them. The series would seem to have consisted of six,¹ judging from that number of corresponding woodcut copies (B. vii., 159, 140-145) having been engraved by Albert Dürer: numbers 142, 143, and 144 (B. vii.) of these copies are the same in size and treatment, as the three prints described by Passavant.

Impressions of these panels of ornament of the *Accademia* were amongst the reminiscences of Italian art Albert Dürer took back with him from Venice to Nuremberg, as the six woodcut copies, marked with the "A.D." monogram, were published soon after his return. The apparent larger size of the woodcuts, as stated by Passavant, is not in the designs, which correspond in dimension, but Dürer added a surrounding shadow, extending beyond the outline of the pattern, the outer rim of the pattern in the Italian prints being the limit of the engraving. The ornamentation, moreover, at the four corners, detached from the centre in the originals, is connected with it in the woodcuts: an arabesque coil, in single line, is also inserted in the blank space of the outer square margin the woodcuts are enclosed in.

From the correspondence, in the method of their cutting, with the various woodcuts Albert Dürer was engaged in the production of, during the period commencing in 1506, we arrive at the knowledge of the probable date of these copies of the "gruppi." Passavant, with his usual advocacy of his countryman's claim to precedence, overlooking Vasari's words respecting Leonardo, "*Oltrechè perse tempo fino a disegnare gruppi di corde,*" contends (v., 182, 9) that the woodcuts are the originals, from which the Italian prints were copied. Besides the presumptive evidence, derived from the inscriptions, that they were designed and issued in the early years succeeding the foundation of the

¹ Passavant is evidently in error (P. v., 182) in stating eight to have been the number of them.

Accademia, the additions made by Albert Dürer, in connecting the ornamentation in the corners with the centre composition, confuse the simplicity seen in the Italian prints, clearly showing that the woodcuts were of later workmanship. At the end of his "Essai Bibliographique sur les anciens modèles de lingerie," the Marquis d'Adda discusses the errors in the fifth volume of "Le Peintre-Graveur" of Passavant, published after the author's death, especially as regards the priority claimed for Albert Dürer's woodcut copies of the "gruppi di corde," remarking that could Passavant have revised his notes about them, before they were printed, they would certainly have been entirely re-written.

With more general accord the print of three horses' heads (P. v., 54, 3) is accepted as having been engraved by Leonardo. The slight lines of the shading, directed from left to right, tell us of the use in their cutting of the left hand, which we know much of Leonardo's work was done with. Ottley, in his "Inquiry" (473, note), and M. Duplessis, in his "Histoire de la Gravure en Italie," call attention to the circumstance of impressions of the three horses' heads being separated, and pasted in the midst of drawings of similar studies, in the margin of one of the volumes of Leonardo's MSS. in the Royal Library at Windsor, considering it confirmatory of his having been the engraver. M. Duplessis remarks (p. 79): "We should be inclined to attribute to Leonardo da Vinci the three horses' heads seen in many public collections. The first time we noticed the print was with some old engravings of the Italian school, and we at once pronounced Leonardo da Vinci to be the author, so much did it recall drawings by him we had met with at Milan, Florence, and Paris. Being desirous, notwithstanding our impression, to ascertain what had been said by previous writers, we found Passavant attributed the print to Verrocchio, the master of Leonardo, and Ottley was in favour of its being the great artist's own work. With our attention thus directed to the subject, we took the

opportunity of studying at Windsor, in the rich collection of the Queen of England, the three MS. volumes of Leonardo preserved there, and our gratification was considerable, when we observed the print pasted down in the margin of one of the leaves, in the midst of several drawings of horses, presenting, under Leonardo's own hand, the confirmation of our opinion. The proof, material though it is, thus unexpectedly supplied, is not altogether conclusive; Leonardo might have borrowed a design from his master, in aid of the work he was engaged upon; but it was confirmatory of the views we entertained, yielding more than an appearance of probability to our hypothesis. We are therefore strongly disposed to regard Leonardo da Vinci as the author of the prints of the profile of a young woman, the four studies for a fighting warrior, and the three horses' heads."

The draughtsman of the print of the four studies for a fighting warrior evidently must have likewise been the engraver of it: no mere copier of such slight but spirited drawings could have retained their truth and originality, in the process of their reproduction: with the knowledge of their purpose, as designs for the Sforza statue, they carry conviction in their thorough rendering of his manner, that by Leonardo's hand they were engraved. The only known impression of the print, mentioned by Passavant (v., 181, 3) as belonging to Vallardi of Milan, has since been acquired, according to the Marquis d'Adda, by Signor Luigi Angiolini of Milan. Many drawings corresponding with it are in the Windsor collection. The Marquis d'Adda, whose description is accompanied by a fac-simile, pronounced the print to be more probably by the hand of Leonardo than any other attributed to him.

The Museum at Frankfort possesses a crayon sketch by Leonardo, of a fight between a dragon and a lion, one of the numerous compositions emblematical of the rivalry between Milan and Venice. In the British Museum there is a rare undescribed engraving of it, replete with Leonardo's

energy of execution : of this engraving Zoan Andrea made a reversed copy (B. xiii., 306, 20). Another of the mythical allegories, which were so popular at the end of the fifteenth century, with the representation of a lion and a lioness, a boar and a unicorn, attacked by a dragon, the horn of the unicorn being transfixed in the dragon's neck, is preserved in a rare print, which Bartsch catalogued, in error, amongst the works of Duvet (vii., 515, 44), by the title of "*Poison et contre poison.*" A naked man, crowned with a wreath of ivy, is seated on the left, holding with both hands a convex mirror, directing the rays refracted from it upon the group of animals : the composition is full of the characteristics of Leonardo's drawing and his imaginative conception, but the interpretation of the subject baffles all attempt at explanation. A small pen sketch, somewhat like the print, is in the British Museum, a similar sketch being in the Louvre, both ascribed to Leonardo, but their genuineness is extremely doubtful. Another print, corresponding in the method of its cutting to the one last mentioned, of a Fight between two Centaurs (B. xv., 478, 23 ; P. v., 50, 4), gives the representation, with great spirit, of the terrible combat the centaurs are engaged in : the method of the engraving agrees in many respects with the thin clear lines prevailing in some few of the prints, classified as belonging to the school of Leonardo. Erroneously ascribed by Bartsch to Gaspar Reverdino, the last-named print is added by Ottley (447), and by Passavant in an appendix, to the works of the school of Pollajuolo, and amongst them it is classified in the British Museum collection.

A folio volume, first published in a restricted form by Luca Paciolo, "*Sūma de Arithmetica Geometria Proportioni & Proportionalita,*" Vinegia, Paganino, 1494, illustrated with diagrams, was amplified, and subsequently printed, with numerous additions, at Venice in 1509, with the title, "*Divina proportione Opera a tutti gl'ingegni per-*

spicaci e curiosi necessaria. O ve ciascun studioso di Philosophia, Prospectiva, Pictura, Sculptura, Architectura, Musica, e altre Mathematiche, suavissima sottile e admirabile doctrina consequira : e delectarassi : cō varie questione de secretissima scientia.” The book was compiled in connection with the studies pursued in the Accademia at Milan ; and the author, who had been on terms of intimacy with Leonardo da Vinci from the early days of its foundation, was associated with him in the conduct of its schools, and in the promotion and direction of the different branches of science and learning that were taught in them. Leonardo worked with Paciolo in the practical exposition of geometry and optics ; during the years 1495-1498 they were in the joint occupation of a house in Milan, and subsequently, when Leonardo returned to Florence, Paciolo accompanied him, and they lived there together in the same lodging. Dr. Richter adduces the following passage in the book, as referring to the share taken by Leonardo in its compilation : “Nec vero multo post spe animos alentes libellum cui divina proportionē titulus est : Ludovico Sphorciæ Duci mediolanensi nuncupavi : tanto ardore ut schemata quoque sua Vincii nostri Leonardi manibus scalpta : quod opticem instructionem reddere possent addiderim.”

The Marquis d’Adda gives a description of Paciolo’s book, and, upon the ground of his barbarous Latinity, argues that by “scalpta” he intended to express “delineata.” Whatever may be the errors of the Latinity, the word “scalpta” is correct.

The woodcuts Paciolo’s book is illustrated with are rude of workmanship, and Leonardo’s share in them consisted most probably in supplying the drawings.

We gather incidentally from the books published at Milan in the last quarter of the fifteenth century some slight information respecting the progress which there was made in the art of engraving, in its application to the illustration of the literature of the time. In the year 1469, Philippo

Lavagna, who took an active interest in the promotion of printing in the city, established a press by the aid of Antonio Zarotus, a printer from Parma. The first book that was issued is supposed to have been "*Pianti Devotissimi de la Madonna—Mediolani F. Lavagna (1469)*": an edition of Virgil was printed in 1472. Their operations became largely extended, and several other presses were set up in Milan. One of the finest of the early books printed in the city was the *Life*, previously referred to in the notice of Bramante, of Francesco Sforza, by Johannes Simoneta, "*Oratio in commentarios rerum ab Divo Francesco Sphortia Gestarum—auspiciis et jussu Lodovici Sphortiae—Antonius Zarotus impressit Mediolani Decimo Kalendas Februarias. Mccccclxxviii*".

In the previous year a theological tract by Fra Pacifico of Novara was printed by Lavagna, "*Summula di pacifica conscientia—per G. Brebiani in impressione recognitum et Philippum de Lauagnia Mediolanensis impressum—opusculum—9° Kalendas Apriles (sic) en uigilia Dominice Incarnationis expletum est Anno 1479.*" Three copper-plate engravings are introduced in the text; they are but of slight artistic interest, with the exception of a representation of the Virtues of the Madonna, symbolized with a fourfold crown. The only known copy of the book is in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. In 1480 an edition of the "*Devote meditatione sopra la passione del nostre signore*" with small vignettes in its pages was published "*Mediolano per Leonardo Pachel et Vederico Seinzenzeler de Alemania nee MCCCCLXXX a di vii di Octobre.*"

One of the most important illustrated books which emanated from the presses in the city, was a folio edition of the popular treatise upon music by Franchinus Gaforius Laudensis, distinguished by the beauty of its printing, and the engravings the text is ornamented with, published in 1496, "*Practica Mvsice Franchini Gafori Lavdensis—Impressa Mediolani opera et Impensa Ioannis petri de*

Lomatio per Guillerum Signerre Rothomagensem anno salutis Millesimo quadringentissimo nonagesimo sexto die vltimo Septembris."

The science of music was amongst the many accomplishments Leonardo excelled in, and its study in the Accademia was zealously promoted. From the address of the printer, "Magister Gulielmus lesignerre Rothomagensis Figurarum celator ad Lectorem &c.," we learn that he was the engraver of the clever illustrations in the volume, which are full of the spirit of Leonardo's teaching. A figure of Apollo is on the frontispiece, accompanied by three of the Muses, and there are other figures of the Muses and Planets in medallions. The first page is surrounded by a border of children and arabesques, with candelabra at the sides: Apollo is in the centre at the top, and at the foot is an armorial shield with two supporters; on the left of it a man and boys are singing, and on the right Gaforius is represented teaching his scholars. A floreated margin surrounds leaf a a, 1, containing a medallion of Amphion luring the stones with his lyre in the construction of the walls of Thebes: at the foot, in the centre, there is an armorial shield supported by boys, a medallion being on the left with Amphion playing to the dolphins, and another on the right with Orpheus charming the beasts. The borders and margins are repeated on other pages of the volume.

In the following year appeared "Legendario di Santi istoriado vulgar:—traducte in lingua vulgar per—nicholao de manerbi veneto—stampate in Milano per Magistro Vederico Seinzenzeler MCCCCLXXXVII", with vignettes by a Milanese artist, of great beauty of treatment, their inspiration being evidently traceable to the source from which had emanated the illustrations of the Malermi Bible and other books of the time at Venice. A copy of the "Legendario" is in the Imperial Library at Vienna. In 1498 Gulielmus Signerre, the printer of the "Practica Musica," published, in association with his brother, a folio volume, "Specchio di

Anima—hoc opus lingue ytalice traductum fuit per devotū Ludovicum besalu Hispanie feliciter scripsit—Impressum Mediolani per Guillemos le Signerre fratres Rothomagenses MCCCCLXXXVIII di XXIII martii Impensis Johanis de bifignādis de Vigleuano. Laus Deo Amen.” The woodcuts it is illustrated with occupy nearly the full page, but slight space being left for the text: they are printed on forty-four leaves, with seventy-eight subjects of sacred history: the first nine represent the history of the fall of man, the remainder being devoted to the delineation of the Life and Death of Our Saviour. The drawing is very spirited, the figures being cut in strong outline.

In the same year an edition of *Æsop* was published at the Signerre press: “Le fabule de Esopo vulgare e latine historiade—Impressum mediolani p. Guillemos le Signerre fratres Rothomagenses,” with woodcuts copied from the Venice edition of 1492.

In 1499 the brothers Signerre used a considerable number of the blocks which had been engraved for the “*Specchio di Anima*” for another illustrated volume: “*Tesauro spirituale, cum le epistole et evangelii historiate: cum le meditatione de sancto Bonaventura—Impressum Mediolani per Guilermos fratres Rothomagenses MCCCCLXXXVIII die XVIII Martii . Impensis Johannis de bifignandis de Vigleuano.*” Several additional blocks were engraved for it, surrounded by ornamented borders. The account of the book is taken from the only known copy in the Imperial Library at Berlin.

In the “*Italienische Holzschnitt*” of Dr. Lippmann (pp. 85-89) the particulars of the last four volumes are given, from which we derive our brief notice of them. Dr. Lippmann’s descriptions are accompanied by a fac-simile of one of the large woodcuts in the “*Tesauro spirituale*,” of much interest, in the peculiarity of its drawing, of Our Saviour addressing from a richly carved pulpit, the Magdalene, and nine other listeners, assembled in front of him.

Engraving, in its application to the literature of the day, arrived at no special development in Milan, as it had done at Florence and Venice, and the disruption of the schools, and of the association of professors and students congregated in the city, which ensued, to a material extent, on the first advent of Charles VIII. and his troops, was completed, upon the break up of the princely rule of the Sforzas on their flight in 1499, and the printing operations, of which the brothers Signerre were then the leading promoters in Milan, were for a time put a stop to. The brothers removed their presses to Saluzzo, and Dr. Lippmann continues the account of the publications they there carried on in the early years of the sixteenth century.

At the conclusion of his notice of the Milanese books, Dr. Lippmann makes mention of certain woodcuts in the Berlin Cabinet, attributable, as he considers, to the engravers at Milan of the end of the fifteenth century, which are of considerable artistic excellence, judging from the reproductions he gives of some of them. One, of Our Saviour, in half-figure, bearing His Cross, is full of the spirit of Leonardo da Vinci's drawing, the engraving being refined and delicate in its peculiar treatment.





CHAPTER XXV.

LEONARDO DA VINCI (CONTINUED).



ON the first entry of the French soldiers into Milan in 1499, Leonardo da Vinci proceeded to Venice. He was there in March, 1501, as we learn from a letter, quoted by Dr. Richter, addressed from the city in that month to the Marchioness of Gonzaga by Lorenzo da Pavia, informing her Leonardo had painted her portrait. The portrait has not been identified.

Leonardo's efforts to procure employment in Venice were attended with but slight success; for the Bellini and their numerous followers, with Titian, who was then rising into eminence, absorbed the patronage there to be met with. In the summer of 1501 Leonardo went back to Florence, and although his friend, the gonfaloniere Pietro Soderini, restored his name to the list of the painters, and endowed him with an annual stipend, the political anxieties the inhabitants of the city were involved in, left them neither inclination nor means for the bringing into requisition Leonardo's talents as a painter. During four years and upwards he lingered over the portrait of the Neapolitan beauty, Mona Lisa, the third wife of his friend Zanobi del' Giocondo—"La belle Joconde" of the Louvre,—and the minuteness wherewith the details are elaborated, tells us how reluctant he was to allow the picture to be removed

from his easel. It was commenced soon after his return to Florence, when the excitement of the sixteen eventful years of his sojourn at Milan had passed away, and remained uncompleted during his engagement in the service of Cæsar Borgia. The payment for it of 4,000 gold florins by Francis I., some few years afterwards, records how highly the picture was esteemed at the time.

An altar-piece was required for one of the chapels of the church of Santa Maria dell' Annunziata, and Filippino Lippi, to whom the commission had been offered, conceded it to Leonardo. The Serviti monks ("Servi di Maria") took him into residence in their monastery, adjoining the church, and preparations were made for the picture, which never progressed beyond the design. A fine drawing of the composition, in black chalk, attributed to Leonardo, representing the Madonna seated on the knees of S. Anna, accompanied by the Infant Saviour and S. John, is now the property of the Royal Academy in London. An altar-piece for the chapel was eventually painted by Perugino.

In 1502 a different field of occupation was unexpectedly offered to Leonardo. In the spring of the year he entered the service of Cæsar Borgia, as engineer in the military campaigns he was engaged in, and evidence of the energy he worked with under his new employer is seen at Windsor, in the series, amongst other drawings, of six coloured maps of the district on the west of the Adriatic, finished with minute geographical detail of the country. Amongst them is one of the town of Imola. At the beginning of October, 1502, Cæsar Borgia was shut up there, through a revolt of the condottieri, and Leonardo most probably was with him. From the entries in the MSS. respecting these campaigns, we gather various notices of the engineering works Leonardo conducted, during the duke's destructive warfare: the conquered fortresses were placed under his management, and a decree was issued, investing him with the charge of their alteration and improvement.

In August, 1503, Alexander VI. fell a victim to a tertian fever he was suffering from ; rumour ascribed the death to poison, taken in mistake, which had been prepared for the Cardinal of Corneto by the Pope and his son, the latter narrowly escaping his father's fate. It resulted in putting an end to Cæsar Borgia's ambitious career, and Leonardo's engagement ; he consequently again returned to Florence, and to the leisure time that was upon his hands we are indebted for the high finish bestowed upon the portrait of Mona Lisa.

The ability Leonardo had displayed in Cæsar Borgia's service was taken advantage of by the government, and he was appointed engineer to the city. A commission also was given to him to decorate the Sala del' Consiglio in the Palazzo della Signoria, with a representation of the Battle of Anghiari, commemorative of the victory gained near Borgo San Sepolchro, in 1440, by the Florentines over the Milanese general, Niccolō Piccinino. In October, 1503, Leonardo began the cartoon in the Sala del Papa of Santa Maria Novella, and continued actively employed upon it until February, 1504, its vastness far exceeding any similar work previously undertaken, the record being preserved in the archives that nearly two reams of royal folio paper were employed, and eighty-eight pounds of flour were consumed for paste to attach them to the lining. In March, 1505, he commenced the painting in the Sala del Consiglio, and was engaged upon it until the end of May, 1506.¹ The speculative experiments in the pigments Leonardo made use of were again unsuccessful, and the fresco rapidly perished, owing to the failure of the means resorted to for fixing the colours.² He had been paid in advance, and dissatis-

¹ See note by Cav. Milanese, Vasari, iv., pp. 43-45.

² In August, 1505, Michelangelo, in pursuance of the order he had received from Pietro Soderini in the previous year, commenced the ornamentation of the opposite wall, the subject selected being the Pisan soldiers disturbed by Florentine troops whilst bathing in the Arno.

faction arose between him and the Seigniorship and his supporter Soderini, which most probably occasioned his departure from Florence.

Before the end of 1506 Leonardo was again resident at Milan, in the pay of Louis XII., with whom during the ensuing nine years, up to the king's death, he continued on terms of friendly intercourse. A close bond of intimacy had arisen between Leonardo and his wealthy pupil Francesco Melzi, in whose house in the city much of his time was passed. Occasional visits of short duration were made to Florence, connected principally with his private affairs; his father had died in 1504,¹ and a lawsuit with his brothers respecting the inheritance seems to have been protracted for some years, as it still was pending in 1511. Amongst other letters from Louis XII., there is one dated 26th of July, 1507, addressed to the Seigniorship of Florence, in which the king styles Leonardo "our dearly and well beloved painter and court engineer." From the letters we learn that Leonardo's scientific skill had been brought again into requisition in Milan, where there was an ample field for its exercise, in the extension of the works he had directed with great practical efficiency in the plains of Lombardy on his previous sojourn in the city.

Amongst the few paintings which were completed by Leonardo during this his second residence in Milan, was the altar-piece of "La Vierge aux rochers," formerly in the collection of Francis I., and now in the Louvre. Another similar composition, varying in many respects from the picture in the Louvre, recently bought from the Earl of Suffolk for the National Gallery in London, was executed for the Cappella della Concezione at Milan; it was purchased and

¹ The following is Leonardo's record of his father's death (Richter, ii., 416, 1372), "On the 9th of July, 1504, Wednesday at seven o'clock, died Ser Piero da Vinci, notary at the Palazzo del Podesta, my father, being eighty years old, leaving behind ten sons and two daughters."

taken to England by Gavin Hamilton, who sold it to the Earl of Suffolk. Very few easel pictures were painted by Leonardo, and this addition to the National Gallery collection is one of the most valuable examples of them extant.

The victory gained by the French at the battle of Ravenna, on the 11th April, 1512, at the sacrifice of their commander Gaston de Foix, and more than half their army, so exhausted their power, that before six weeks were over, the Swiss had come down from the mountains, and instituted Maximilian, the eldest son of Lodovico Sforza, governor of Milan, although the French still occupied the citadel. The abandonment by Louis XII. of his schemes of aggrandisement in Italy, his attention being taken up with the arrangements for his marriage with Mary the young sister of Henry VIII. of England, and the exactions which ensued of the ill-paid French troops, who remained in Milan, and of the Swiss, who served to maintain such slight power as Maximilian was possessed of, must have rendered life in the city insupportable. The accession, in March 1513, of Giovanni de' Medici to the papacy as Leo X., and the persuasions, probably, of Leonardo's friend, the Pope's younger brother Giuliano, induced him to try his fortune at Rome, and in one of his manuscripts is the entry, that, on the 24th September, 1514, he set out for the city, accompanied by his favourite pupils Francesco Melzi and Salai of Milan, and other artists.

The Pope's preoccupation with Raphael and Michelangelo evidently interfered with the anticipated commissions. The jealousy of the latter, who some years previously, whilst they were at work together at Florence, had taunted Leonardo upon his inability to finish the statue he had undertaken, a taunt which was equally applicable to the maker of it with respect to his own unfinished monument of Julius II., must have rendered their employment by the same patron a matter of considerable difficulty. Dissatisfaction at the neglect Leonardo encountered evidently arose, the only

ascertained employment he was entrusted with, being the reforming of the Roman Mint.

His friend and supporter Giuliano de' Medici having gone to France, early in 1515,¹ to conclude his matrimonial engagement with Filiberta, the daughter of the Duke of Savoy and aunt of the French king, Francis I., Leonardo somewhat hastily took his departure from Rome.

Louis XII., within a few weeks of his marriage with Mary of England, died on New Year's Day, 1515, and his nephew Francis I., who succeeded him on the French throne, reasserted his claim to the Duchy of Milan; immediately after his victory at Marignano, in the autumn of the year, he marched into Milan with his army, on the 23rd October. Leonardo having, on the king's invitation, proceeded to join him,² was warmly welcomed, and included in the courtly retinue which accompanied the king to Bologna, on the occasion of his audience there with the Pope in December following. Early in 1516, Leonardo went with his new master to France, endowed with a stipend of seven hundred scudi, and after three years of failing health, during which he was treated with affectionate solicitude, the royal Chateau de Cloux in Touraine, near Amboise, having been assigned to him for a residence, he died there on the 2nd May, 1519.

Of wife or children there is no record; the account of the disposition made by Leonardo of his property, quoted by Dr. Richter from the anonymous biographer, tells of the firmness of his friendship. His pupils, Francesco Melzi and Salai

¹ "The Magnifico Giuliano de' Medici left Rome on the 9th January, 1515, just at daybreak, to take a wife in Savoy; and on the same day fell the death of the King of France."—Note in Leonardo's writing. Dr. Richter's "*Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*," ii., 417.

² Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their life of Raphael (ii., 346), express the opinion that Leonardo, by the Pope's commands, accompanied him to Florence and Bologna in the autumn of 1515, and that his engagement with Francis I. was then entered into with the Pope's consent.

(the latter being described by Vasari as “a youth of singular grace and beauty of person, with waving curly hair”) were in attendance at his death. They had both been with him at Milan in the days of his prosperity, at the end of the preceding century, and remained with him throughout his chequered life until its close. “To Melzi he left his papers, to Salai and his servant Battista Vilani, his garden near Milan, and to his brothers the sum of four hundred ducats, deposited at Santa Maria Nuova in Florence.” The garden most probably was a vineyard, given to him in April, 1499, by Lodovico Sforza, preceding his flight from Milan in August following. The protracted family litigation he had been engaged in was settled amicably, as we learn by the bequest to his brothers.

Dr. Richter mentions that Leonardo's MSS. remained undisturbed during Melzi's lifetime ; some were obtained by the King of Spain from Melzi's son, who also sold a selection to the sculptor Pompeo Leoni, and others to Dr. Guido Mazenta. They underwent numerous changes of ownership, which are somewhat difficult to trace, amidst their different vicissitudes :—in 1637 a considerable number of them were in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. On Bonaparte's invasion of Italy several volumes were included in the plunder of Milan, and no record exists of their having been reclaimed, fourteen of those taken to Paris being still in the Library of the Institute. One large and important volume, known as the “Codex Atlanticus,” was not removed from the Ambrosian Library. Some of the most valuable of the MSS. are at Windsor, others in the British and South Kensington Museums, and in the private collections at Holkham and Ashburnham. The MS. in the British Museum, consisting of nearly 300 sheets, treats principally of mathematics. The portion in Windsor Castle contains the largest collection of designs : highly interesting amongst them are Leonardo's valuable anatomical notes, and the drawings which accompany them. In the Forster

Library, in the South Kensington Museum, there are three volumes of miscellaneous notes and memoranda.

In 1881 Dr. Richter contributed an article to the sixteenth volume of the "Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst" (Leipzig), entitled "Leonardo da Vinci im Orient," written with a personal knowledge, as he informs us, of the localities supposed to have been visited, to prove that Leonardo, in his early manhood (*circa* 1480-1484), passed some time in the East, in the service of the Sultan of Babylon, and became a Mohammedan.

In support of his argument Dr. Richter gives various quotations from Leonardo's MSS., especially from four leaves in the "Codex Atlanticus" at Milan, interpreted by him to be the drafts or copies of letters, bearing the superscription "Al Diodario di sorio, locotenente del sacro Solitano di babilonia," prepared, as he considered, to be addressed by Leonardo to the "Diodario," and that consequently they contain decisive proof of the personal presence of Leonardo in Asia Minor. Dr. Richter supplies certain translations from the four leaves, the following being the substance¹ of the first of them:—"The recent disaster in our northern parts, which I am certain will terrify not you alone but the whole world, which shall be related to you in due order, showing first the effect and then the cause [breaks off].

"Finding myself in this part of Armenia to carry into effect with due love and care the task for which you sent me, and to make a beginning in a place which seemed to me to be the most to our purpose, I entered into the city of Calindra (?), near to our frontiers. This city is situated at the base of that part of the Taurus mountains which is divided from the Euphrates, and looks towards the peaks

¹ The translation is copied from that given by Dr. Richter, in his "Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci" (ii., 385), 2 vols. 8vo, London, 1883.

of the great Mount Taurus to the west. These peaks are of such a height that they seem to touch the sky, and in all the world there is no part of the earth higher than its summit; and the rays of the sun always fall upon it on its east side four hours before day-time, and being of the whitest stone it shines resplendently, and fulfils the function to these Armenians which a bright moonlight would in the midst of the darkness, and by its great height it out-reaches the utmost level of the clouds by a space of four miles in a straight line. This peak is seen in many places towards the west, illuminated by the sun after its setting the third part of the night."

Dr. Richter added, that the detailed report to the Devatdar,¹ accompanied by drawings, fortunately has come down to us, and announced his intention to publish photolithographic reproductions of the text and drawings, as they left, he considered, no room for doubt that the materials were gathered by Leonardo in extensive journeys in Asia Minor, remarking that it seemed to him impossible to question the fact that Leonardo was the writer of the letters, and that he really was for a considerable time in the service of the Sultans of Egypt.

The article must be read to arrive at an understanding of the grounds for the opinions advanced in it. Dr. Richter mentioned that, as regarded the city of Calindra, many geographers might well have been inclined to place it in the region of Utopia; and that it might be argued Leonardo, perhaps, merely copied the papers of some friend which interested him, but which he, Dr. Richter, did not consider was at all likely to have been the case.

¹ In a note by Dr. Richter to his article in the "Zeitschrift," he writes: "The meaning of the word *Diodario* has its difficulties. The vocabulary of the Romance Greek and Latin languages knows neither this nor any similar sounding word. In Turkish *Defterdar* is still at the present day the title of a high state official (*Defter*—volume, book; *dar*—holding, keeping); the corresponding Arabic word is *Devatdar*—the *Diodario* of Leonardo is identical with the Arabic *Devatdar*."

The first notice taken of the four leaves in the "*Codex Atlanticus*," referred to by Dr. Richter, was some few years previous to his contribution to the "*Zeitschrift*," on the occasion of the completion of the statue to Leonardo da Vinci, erected at Milan in 1872. An official announcement was made, that for the purpose of worthily celebrating its inauguration, the Commendatore Correnti (the minister of public instruction) was desirous of promoting a publication from Leonardo's works, and accordingly a folio volume was issued, entitled "*Saggio delle opere di Leonardo da Vinci*," Milano, Giovanni Ricordi, 1872, with twenty-four full-size photo-lithographs from the "*Codex Atlanticus*," produced under the care of the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Milano. The commentary upon the scientific portion of the volume was written by Professor Gioberto Govi, with remarks upon the geographical knowledge of Leonardo da Vinci, and that amongst his unfinished works there was a curious description of Mount Taurus, in the form of a letter addressed to "Diodario de Soria, lieutenant of the Caliph of Babylon."

In 1883 Dr. Richter published his work upon the MSS. of Leonardo da Vinci, entitled "*The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci, compiled and edited from the original manuscripts*," the transcripts from them, accompanied by an English translation, being printed in parallel columns. At the end of the second volume, the section headed "Letters, Personal Records, Dated Notes" (pp. 381, 417), is accompanied by four photogravures of leaves from the "*Codex Atlanticus*," plates 116, 117, being entitled "Sketch of Armenian Mountains," with text; plate 118, "Sketch of a Peak in Armenia, and Sketch Map of Armenia," with text; and plate 119, "Sketch Map of Armenia," with text.

The translation from the text of the first of these leaves has previously been given. The three succeeding leaves contain accounts of the Taurus range and Armenia, accompanied by slight pen sketches in their margins, with descriptions of the sufferings and privations attendant

upon a sojourn amongst them, exceeding in their severity the power of human endurance to sustain. No further mention is made of the detailed Report, referred by Dr. Richter in his communication to the "*Zeitschrift*," which apparently he had not succeeded in discovering. At the foot of the first of the four leaves are some notes, also in Leonardo's writing, headed "*Divisione del Libro*," which Dr. Richter (ii., 388) describes as "evidently the contents of a connected report or book, but not of one which he had at hand; more probably, indeed, of one he purposed writing."

As this "*Divisione del Libro*" appears to be the sole authority for Dr. Richter's opinion, that Leonardo became a Mohammedan, we give the text of his published translation of it.

"The praise and confession of the faith (*persuasione di fede*). The sudden inundation, to its end. The destruction of the city. The death of the people and their despair. The preacher's search, his release and benevolence. Description of the cause of this fall of the mountain. The mischief it did. Fall of snow. The finding of the prophet. His prophecy. The inundation of the lower portion of Eastern Armenia, the draining of which was effected by the cutting through the Taurus mountains. How the new prophet showed that this destruction would happen as he had foretold. Description of the Taurus mountains, and the River Euphrates."

Dr. Richter appends a note "'*Persuasione di fede*' of the Christian, or the Mohammedan faith? We must suppose the latter, at the beginning of a document addressed to so high a Mohammedan official."

In a note to the "*Letters, &c.*" Dr. Richter adds (ii. 386), "I have endeavoured to show, and I believe that I am also in a position to prove, with regard to these texts, that they are drafts of letters actually written by Leonardo: at the same time I must not omit to mention, that shortly after

I had discovered these texts in the 'Codex Atlanticus,' and published a paper on the subject in the 'Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst' (vol. 16), Professor Govi put forward this hypothesis to account for their origin (ii., 387), 'as regards the descriptions of Mount Taurus, of Armenia, and of Asia Minor, which are contained in the other fragments, they were taken from some contemporary geographer or traveller. Judging from the imperfect index ("divisione del libro") annexed to these fragments, it seems probable that Leonardo had the intention of making a book of them, which however he did not carry out. In any case, however, it is not possible to discover, in these rough notes, any proof of a journey made by Leonardo in the East, nor of his conversion to the religion of Mahomet, as some writers assert. Leonardo was passionately fond of geographical studies, and amongst his writings one frequently finds itineraries, notes, and descriptions of places, birds'-eye views, maps, and topographical sketches of various regions: it is not therefore strange that he, fluent writer as he was, should have formed the idea of writing a species of romance, in the form of letters, laying the plot in Asia Minor, regarding which the books of that time, and perhaps some traveller and friend of his, may have suggested to him some details more or less fantastic.'"

There is nothing throughout the whole range of the various MSS., confirmatory of the interpretation put upon the four pages in the "Codex Atlanticus," that they render the account of a visit paid by Leonardo da Vinci to Asia, or to sustain Dr. Richter's surmise, that the writing represents the drafts of letters addressed personally by Leonardo to the "Diodario."

The supposition that Leonardo swerved from the faith he had been reared in, is refuted by the commencement of his will, written a year before his death, wherein he "commends his soul to Our Lord Almighty God, and to the Glorious Virgin Mary, and to Our Lord S. Michael, and

all the blessed Angels and Saints, male and female, in Paradise."

The knowledge we possess of the painters who were assembled in fellowship at Milan, during the years of prosperity and freedom from invasion enjoyed under the rule of the Sforzas, is extremely limited. Previous to the advent of Bramante and Leonardo da Vinci, no organization of artists had apparently been established in the city, and the schools Lodovico Sforza was earnest in encouraging, and Leonardo initiated the institution of, were dispersed when, in 1499, the dynasty became superseded, on the French king's occupation of the capital. The state of society which ensued broke up the association of followers and students that had been formed under the master's teaching; but his influence prevailed throughout a long succeeding period, and numerous artists of great eminence, many of whom were Lombard citizens, preserved the designation of the Milanese School far into the ensuing century.

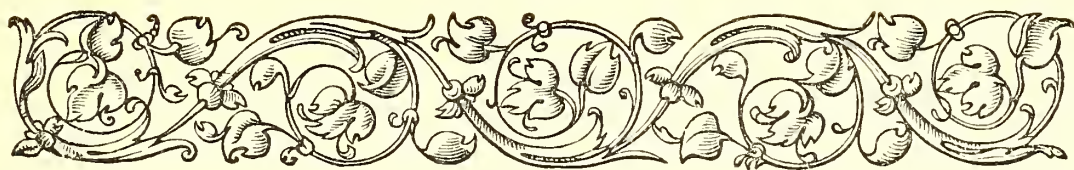
From the date of the dissolution of the *Accademia*, we have no trace of the survival of engraving in Milan, save only such practice of it as continued to be exercised in connection with the literature of the day, and was applied in the illustration of the books issued from the presses in the city. Several prints are designated as of the Milanese School, but, with the exception of those we have noticed, and the woodcuts described by Dr. Lippmann, no others are known which can, with any certainty, be assigned to Milan as the place of their production, nor is there the trace of any of the painters, who imitated and followed Leonardo da Vinci's teaching, having practised engraving.

In the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" for June, 1865 (xviii., p. 546), a short article was published by the late M. Galichon, "De quelques estampes Milanaises attribuées à Cesare da Sesto," with the description of five prints the writer considered were by his hand: they consist of the Beheading

of S. John the Baptist (accompanied by a reduced facsimile), arranged in the British Museum collection amongst the engravings of Marcello Fogolino; the Combat of Animals (B. vii., 515, 44), previously mentioned at page 377; two prints of Stags (P. v., 166, 16, 17), generally regarded as by Giulio Campagnola; and an impression from a medallion of Pope Adrian VI.

No mention has come down to us of Cesare da Sesto as an engraver, nor is there any authority for his identification with the prints thus ascribed to him.





CHAPTER XXVI.

ROBETTA. GHERARDO.

ROBETTA.

WE have to revert once more to Florence, where the goldsmith Robetta, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, became a popular member of its art society, and acquired considerable reputation as an engraver. Our personal acquaintance with him is limited to the signature "Robetta," where-with he marked his prints, and to the mention that he was admitted into the fraternity the artists had formed in Florence, of which Vasari (vi., 609) has given an account in his memoir of the architect Giovan-Francesco Rustici (1460-1540).

The names of the twelve members of the fraternity, many of them eminent in their day, are given by Vasari, "il Robetta orafo" being one of their number, with particulars of the proceedings pursued at their festive gatherings, which attracted considerable attention. They called themselves the Brotherhood of the "Paiuolo;" their meetings were held in the "Sapienza,"¹ and every guest contributed a dish to the

¹ At the end of the thirteenth century a certain Niccolò da Uzano left by his will a sum of money to establish a public studio. The building was commenced in 1401, the designation of the "Sapienza" being given to it, from the college of the name founded at Rome in 1244 by Innocent IV. The studio was never carried to completion, as the money bequeathed by

repast, which was expected to display some novelty of invention. Vasari tells us of several of these dishes, a contribution by Andrea del Sarto being described as "in the form of a temple of eight sides, resembling the Baptistery of San Giovanni, but raised upon columns. The pavement of this temple was an enormous dish of jelly, divided into compartments of various colours, to represent mosaic; the columns, which appeared to be of porphyry, were large thick sausages; the capitals were made of Parmesan cheese, the cornices of sugar-work, and the tribune was formed out of sections of marchpane. In the centre of the temple was a singing desk, made of cold veal; the book was formed of larsagna (a thin flour paste), the letters and musical notes being made of pepper-corns; the singers standing before the desk were roasted thrushes, and other small birds, placed upright, with their beaks wide open, as in the act of chanting; they wore a sort of shirt, resembling the tunic of the choristers, formed of a caul of hog's-lard; behind them stood two very fat pigeons as contra-bassi, with six ortolans to represent the soprani, or trebles." A dish, contributed by Spillo the painter, was of the figure of a tinker, made from a large goose; and that of Domenico Puligo resembled a scullery-maid watching a brood of chickens, formed out of a roasted pig. Robetta provided a calf's head, shaped as an anvil with its fittings.

With the exception of the foregoing record of his connection with this convivial company, and the mention that one of their meetings was held in 1512, we learn nothing further of Robetta, save what can be gathered from his prints. They are all without date or Christian name, and the probable period of their execution depends on the identification that can be made of them with the works of

N. da Uzano was spent by the Florentines in the wars they became engaged in. The site of the building is recorded by the street Via della Sapienza, leading from Piazza S. Marco to Piazza della Sant^{ma} Annunziata.

the painters his acquaintances, from whose drawings they were engraved.

Huber, in his "*Manuel des Amateurs*" (iii., 50), stated that the productions of the burin of Robetta seemed to be much anterior to those of Mantegna, and Ottley (459) assigned them to the latter part of the fifteenth century, adding that "he appears to have possessed a fertile imagination, and to have composed with facility. In his small draped figures of females or angels he is frequently graceful; but he was not equally successful in his naked figures, which are often lamely drawn, and sometimes ill-proportioned." The fertile imagination Ottley accredits Robetta with, is due only to the diversified style of the compositions his friends entrusted to him to work from; judging by the prints themselves, and the slight information derivable from Vasari of the artists he was associated with, the period of their production is clearly attributable to an early date in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

An Adoration of the Magi (B. 6), where the Holy Family are seated under an open penthouse, in the midst of an animated crowd surrounding them, is fuller of incident than we meet with in the generality of his prints, and the early impressions are of very delicate workmanship.¹ Another attractive composition, of Our Saviour taking leave of His Mother (B. 9), called by Passavant (v., 59, 9) Our Saviour and the Woman of Samaria at the well, is noticeable from the novelty of its treatment, with its clever arrangement of the groups in the mid-distance of the scene. Filippino Lippi was evidently the artist from whom he obtained the drawings for both of them. Very different in their conception and expression are his two prints, the one of the Resurrection (B. 10), with the somewhat fantastic figure of Our Saviour, and the animated action of the four

¹ The plate was bought in 1860 by Del Majno, a dealer in Milan, and reworked and printed from until recently.

watchers rushing away in dismay from the tomb,—and the other, of the group of the Madonna, attended by the Magdalene and S. Sebastian on either side of her (P. 32), with the calm dignified manner of its treatment.

Robetta's allegorical representation, catalogued by Bartsch as the Lyre (B. 23) upraised on a pedestal, with the Tragic Muse on one side, and the Comic Muse on the other striking its chords, identified by the masks they are accompanied with, is also after Filippino Lippi. Ottley, who had not seen the print, describes (p. 472) the composition as having been derived from a fresco in *chiar-oscuro* in the Cappella Strozzi, in the church of S^a. Maria Novella at Florence, owing to the particulars of it agreeing with a drawing of the fresco by Filippino Lippi he had before him. To an early period is ascribable the group called by Bartsch, an old woman and two pair of lovers (B. 24); a probable date has been given to the print from the buildings in the background being considered to be copied from Dürer's print of the Effects of Jealousy (B. vii., 73), engraved about 1504. In the Fountaine collection of Italian majolica at Narford Hall, in Norfolk, which was dispersed by auction at Messrs. Christie's sale-rooms in London in the spring of 1884, there was a lustred dish by Maestro Giorgio, copied from the print, marked at the back with his monogram and the date 1525. The dish is described by Gianbattista Passeri in his book upon Italian majolica, printed in the middle of the last century, and he states that Gubbio is the town represented in the distant view. A dancing child is in the lower corner on the left, a youth and maiden embracing are seated immediately above him, a corresponding couple, in the prime of manhood, being on the opposite side, and an old woman with long dishevelled hair is in the centre between them: the composition is probably intended to represent an allegory of childhood, youth, manhood, and old age.

Filippino Lippi died in 1505, and to the loss of his guidance, and the no longer having his designs to engrave

from, the inferiority of Robetta's later works may be due ; for many of them he was indebted, it is considered, to the drawings of Ruberto di Filippo Lippi. His two prints of Hercules and Antæus (B. 22), and Hercules and the Hydra (B. 21), are from well-known pictures by Antonio del Pollajuolo. Vasari describes (iii., 294) three large panels of the Labours of Hercules,—of his contests, with Antæus, the Hydra, and the Nemæan Lion, painted for the palace of the Medici, which have been lost. Small replicas of the first two, regarded as being also by the hand of Antonio del Pollajuolo, are in the galleries of the Uffizi, spoken of in high terms of commendation in Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's "History of Painting" (ii., 389). Robetta's two prints are from drawings for the pictures, the subject of Hercules and Antæus being correspondent in size with one of them, whilst that of Hercules and the Hydra, engraved with considerable care and finish, is somewhat wider. In the Print Room of the British Museum there is the original pen drawing for the latter composition, which was in the Barnard collection, where it was ascribed to Ghirlandaio ; it is a spirited sketch, evidently by Antonio del Pollajuolo, and the figure of Hercules is very similar to that of one of the combatants, on the left, in Pollajuolo's large print of Hercules and the Giants (B. xiii., 203, 3). The two Florence pictures are engraved in the "Reale Galleria di Firenze illustrata."

Robetta's subjects from the nude, of which there are numerous examples, taken from early Biblical history and mythology, have an awkwardness in their grouping, with an air of discomfort in the figures, through the need of the adjunct of drapery to lessen the defects of his anatomical knowledge. In his series of the life of Adam and Eve these faults of drawing are brought to our attention, and some of the children introduced must be from his own pencil, for no artist could have been guilty of such exaggeration of attitude.

A print of Leda with the Swan (P. v., 61, 36), without monogram or mark to establish its identity, no other impression apparently being known of it, was formerly classified with the series of Robetta's works in the British Museum: it is of higher artistic quality than any known print by his hand, and it has been placed with the anonymous prints of the early Italian School.

In the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth there is an undescribed print of a female saint, standing nearly in the centre of the composition, faced to the front, reading from an open book held with both hands before her, an angel with crossed arms, draped as an acolyte, being on the right in attendance. At the bottom is the inscription "LABEATA FRANCE2CA ROMANA", with the signature "RBTA". The print measures, H., $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, W., $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches, to the outside of the ornamented border, which has a six-petalled flower at each corner.

Robetta's engravings are the work of a clever artificer skilled in the chasing of plate, and are finished with minute and careful exactness. Vasari tells us of the reaction which arose at the end of the century, on the subsidence, after Savonarola's death in 1498, of the religious excitement Florence had been disturbed with, and we have in the later prints of Robetta the indication of the changes in taste, and in the subjects the painters' pencils were directed to the composition of, on the revival of art in the city at the commencement of the sixteenth century.

GHERARDO.

Amongst the numerous artists brought into notice by Lorenzo de' Medici at the end of the fifteenth century, was the miniaturist and worker in mosaic, Gherardo (1445-1497), who by Passavant, in the fifth volume of his "*Peintre-Graveur*" (v., 55), is included amongst the early Florentine

engravers. His authority for doing so is based upon a passage in Vasari's Life of Gherardo (iii., 240), wherein he writes: "Whilst Gherardo was employed upon these things, some prints in the German manner were brought to Florence, engraved by Martin (Schöngauer) and Albert Dürer; being highly pleased with that kind of engraving, he began to work with the burin, and copied admirably some of those prints, to be seen in examples in our book, together with some designs by the same hand." And in the introduction to his Life of Marcantonio Raimondi (v., 397), Vasari further tells us that "Martin Schöngauer sent great numbers of his prints into Italy. Amongst the first which arrived was a Christ on the Cross, with S. John and the Madonna at the foot; the last is such an excellent engraving, that Gherardo, the Florentine miniaturist, applied himself to copy it with the burin with great success; *but it was not followed by any others*, as he did not live long afterwards."

The prints selected by Passavant as being of the workmanship of Gherardo are so varied in their character, that they cannot be arranged under one classification, as having been executed by the same engraver. No trace has been discovered of any reproduction of the Crucifixion by Martin Schöngauer, excepting the imitation of it by the German engraver, Wencel von Olmutz.

The first print, catalogued by Passavant under the name of Gherardo, is one of Our Saviour standing in the midst of six angels (B. vi., 169, 6), which was placed by Heineken amongst the works of Martin Schöngauer: it is relegated by Bartsch to an appendix of "Prints bearing the mark of Martin Schöngauer, but which were not engraved by that master." Thoroughly German in character, the correctness of its attribution to Gherardo is purely problematical, resting only upon its close correspondence with the German master's productions.

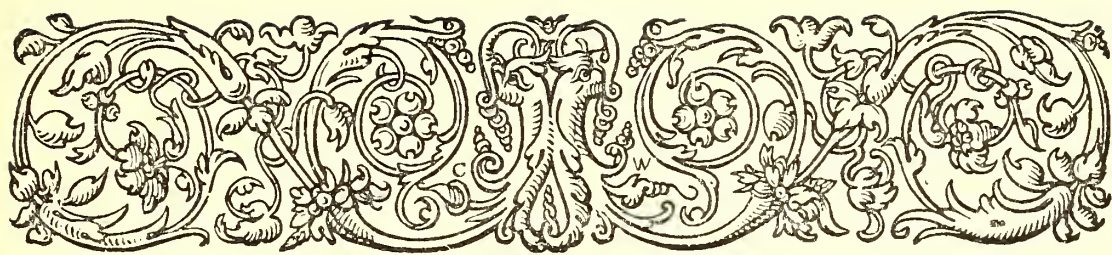
The second print in Passavant's list is very different in

treatment, being an Italianized version, with but slight resemblance, save in the design, to Martin Schöngauer's circular print of the Man of Sorrows (B. vii., 150, 69), where the Saviour is represented standing between the Madonna and S. John, the three figures being in half length. An impression of the print is in the British Museum, placed with the anonymous Italian masters.

The third attribution by Passavant, of a Madonna holding the Infant Saviour on a cushion in front of her, of which also an impression is in the British Museum, is worked in slight clear lines, totally distinct in character from the two preceding examples. It bears no resemblance to either of them, and will be found amongst the early anonymous Italian prints.

From these varied accounts, and the wide difference of style between the prints we have enumerated, there is no reliable authority that either of them was executed by Gherardo's hand. A fourth engraving, of Virginius slaying his daughter, was classified by Bartsch (B. xiii., 108, 5) as anonymous; he remarked upon it that in its style it approached that of Robetta. Ottley (457) expressed an opinion that it might have been engraved by the master Gherardo. His opinion is questioned by Passavant (v., pp. 10, 55), upon the ground that the print differs materially from Martin Schöngauer's manner, which Vasari tells us the master Gherardo imitated. By Mr. Carpenter, who followed the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Wilson, it was placed amongst the works of Robetta. In consequence of these conflicting attributions of the print, it has been placed in the British Museum amongst the works of the early anonymous Italian masters.





CHAPTER XXVII.

FRANCESCO FRANCIA (RAIBOLINI).



MIDST the changes accompanying the advance of civilization throughout Italy, the city of Bologna became distinguished, during the season of tranquillity it was in the enjoyment of in the latter half of the fifteenth century, for the position it assumed amidst the neighbouring principalities, under the firm rule of Giovanni Bentivoglio. All the pursuits of decorative industry steadily progressed towards a high state of maturity, from the personal interest taken by Giovanni Bentivoglio in their promotion, and the schools of painting and metal chasing were crowded with students, attracted by the advantages derived from Francesco Francia's direction of them.

The demand for every variety of ornamented plate, and the skilled products of goldsmiths' workmanship, which Bologna had long been celebrated for, became materially amplified in the last decade of the fifteenth century, through the migration which took place of its artificers to the city on the expulsion of the Medici from Florence, and the crusade declared by Savonarola against the manufacture of all articles of luxury. The practice, moreover, of engraving became largely developed in Bologna under Francia's exercise of it, and his promotion of its adoption as a distinct pursuit.

Francesco di Marco Raibolini ("Il Francia"), the son of an artisan of Bologna, was born there in 1450. His steady advance to the headship of the craft he adopted as a profession, followed by the distinguished position he in after years was promoted to, of leader of the renaissance of painting in the city, which had long remained neglected, invest him with special interest, in his association with the period of its progress in the latter part of the fifteenth century. The courteousness of his manner, and the gentleness of his disposition, rendered him a general favourite, and he became one of the most popular members of the society Giovanni Bentivoglio gathered around him.

In the days of Francia's childhood, after numerous feuds and murderous conflicts, the family of the Bentivoglii, whose successful leader Annibale was treacherously slain in 1445, secured the dominion in Bologna through the powerful support of Cosimo de' Medici. In 1462 Giovanni, the son of Annibale Bentivoglio, in his twenty-third year, was chosen chief of the Senate, a position speedily amplified by him into supreme command. A revolt of the Melvezzi family in 1488 was suppressed with merciless severity. A considerable number of them fell by the hand of the executioner, and those who succeeded in escaping were pursued into various parts of Italy and ruthlessly put to death, resulting in the aggrandisement of the reigning house, and for forty years and upwards its powerful chieftain upheld his influence with despotic authority.

The government for centuries had been contested between Pope and Emperor; the rival factions of Guelph and Ghibelline alternately gained the ascendancy, and repeated changes of dynasty kept the state in perpetual warfare, or in the preparation for it. The immunity from invasion maintained under the strong government of Giovanni Bentivoglio, raised the city to considerable commercial prosperity; men of eminence in science were attracted to the professorships of its schools, in the movement that had

arisen for their restoration to the position they held, prior to the removal to Padua of the students attending them, and the facilities afforded for educational training materially promoted the reputation as a patron of learning, Bentivoglio was desirous of acquiring. The printers became celebrated for the books issued from their presses, and, amongst other costly volumes, an edition was published in 1482 of the *Pentateuch* in Hebrew. Extensive works for the enlargement and embellishment of the city were undertaken, and sculptors and painters were attracted to it for residence, by the welcome they met with, and the liberal emolument for the exercise of their talent that awaited them. Throughout the various vicissitudes which had occurred in the state, the university, originally founded by Theodosius II., and restored by Charlemagne, had upheld its position as one of the great educational centres in Italy. Bentivoglio enlarged its privileges, enriching the library with donations of books and MSS., and paintings and works of sculpture were liberally accumulated to enhance the value of its endowment.

Francia commenced his education from his early youth in a goldsmith's workshop, and speedily attained to great skill as a metal chaser; in 1482 there is an entry of his name in the register of his guild, of which, in the following year, he was elected to the stewardship. Camillus Leonardus in his "*Speculum Lapidum*," Venice, 1516, wrote of Francia, "*Virum cognosco in hac celeberrimum, ac suūm nomine Franciscum Bononiensem aliter frāzā (franzam) qui adeo in tam parvo orbiculo, seu argenti lamina, tot homines, tot animalia, tot montes, arbores, castra ac tot diversa ratione situque posita, figurat, seu incidit, quod dictu ac visu mirabile apparet.*" Passavant (v., 198) refers to a passage in the "*Annali di Bologna*" of Negri, 1494, where he mentions that Francia made a silver pax, valued at 300 florins, for Giovanni Bentivoglio for presentation to Giovanni Sforza and Lucretia Borgia on their marriage in 1493.

This pax, and the other beautiful works in niello by Francia, have nearly all disappeared ; two paxes are preserved in the Library of the Pinacoteca at Bologna, and six small specimens of nielli prints, of doubtful authenticity, are catalogued by Passavant as of his workmanship.

The smallest of the two paxes in the Pinacoteca is in an elaborate silver frame, the face of the arch at the top being chased with a representation of Our Saviour in half figure holding His hands extended, an adoring angel being at either side ; on the frieze beneath is the inscription, “ MEMORARE NOVISSIMÆ TUA ET IN ETERNUM NON PECCABIS ”. Festoons of foliage, suspended from four children’s heads, are carried across the base at the foot. In the spandrels are shields of the arms of Sforza and Bentivoglio, indicating, most probably, that the niello was presented by Giovanni Bentivoglio to his bride Ginevra Sforza on their marriage. In the niello itself, rounded at the top, the Saviour on the cross occupies the centre, an angel being in the air on either side ; the Madonna stands at the left, a kneeling saint being behind her, and S. John the Evangelist is at the right, with S. Jerome on his knees, accompanied by the lion ; Jerusalem, amidst rocks, is in the background.

The other pax, of the Resurrection, is a far finer specimen of workmanship : it is also rounded at the top, and mounted in an arched frame of floreated pattern, with an arabesque on the base ; it was another wedding present, on the occasion of the marriage of Bartolommeo Felicini and Dorotea Ringhieri, shields of their arms being on the pedestals at either side. The subject of the niello is the Saviour rising from the tomb, faced to the front, with the right hand upheld in the act of benediction, and bearing in the other the banner of the cross : the majestic figure is very dignified in its conception, and fully sustains the correctness of the ascription of the pax to Francia : two of the guards recline asleep on the ground in front, the heads of two others being seen at either end, on the far side of the tomb.

An account of the two nielli is given in Vasari (iii., 534, note 2). Engravings of them were made for G. Vallardi, of Milan, early in the present century, for one of his manuals.

Some years elapsed before Francia turned his attention to the pursuit of the profession, wherein he became so famous. Since the days of Vitale and his pupil Lippo Dalmasi, whose expressionless ornamentation of the altars of the churches were the only pictures available for study, in no city of Italy had the progress of painting remained in such complete quiescence as in Bologna, owing to the intestine quarrels its inhabitants were continually engaged in. Marco Zoppo had been educated at Padua in the school of Squarcione, and from the repute which preceded his arrival in Bologna, that his paintings were equal to those of Andrea Mantegna in merit, he received municipal employment for the decoration of the town buildings. Interested as Francia must have been in the work Marco Zoppo was engaged upon, it was probably by a more eminent artist, Lorenzo Costa, with whom he lived on terms of friendship, that he was instigated to extend the skill in drawing he was the master of, to the acquisition of the knowledge of colour. Endowed with every qualification requisite for his new occupation, he rapidly arrived at great executive power as a painter, and his native city, before the close of his active life, became distinguished for the wealth of the grand pictures by his hand, so many of its churches and palaces were enriched with.

Francia's biographer, Niccolo Seccadenari, praises him as the best of goldsmiths, accomplished as a painter, and unrivalled as an artificer of jewels, describing him as extremely handsome in person, with a most eloquent voice. The talent he developed in his new employment attracted general admiration, through the fervent religious earnestness and truthfulness of expression which pervades every picture from his easel. The numerous verses written in his praise commemorate the esteem and affection he was held in; and

the frequent introduction, either of the portrait, or of some incident connected with the patron for whom he was painting the picture he was engaged upon, tells us of the personal interest which existed between him and his employers. Vasari (iii., 537) states that in 1490, when Francia was in his fortieth year, the first painting by his hand was executed for Bartolommeo Felicini, who placed it in the Misericordia, a church outside the walls of Bologna: judging from the finish of execution of the picture, which is now in the Pinacoteca, other paintings must have been precedent to it in the date of their production. The subject is an enthroned Madonna, holding the Infant Saviour on her knee, six saints being in attendance; S. John the Baptist is on the left, and S. Sebastian on the right, behind whom kneels the donor: on the step of the throne a child angel is seated, playing a lute. The figure of S. Sebastian excited the admiration of the Caracci in after years, who regarded it as perfect in the delineation of the human form, and frequently copied it. One of the earliest of Francia's portraits, in Lord Northbrook's gallery in England, was of a Bolognese senator, Bartolommeo Bianchini, who expressed his gratification and his regard for the artist in a sonnet enumerating his virtues. The association existing between them is told in the inscription on another early work, a Holy Family, now in the Imperial Gallery at Berlin, inscribed, "*Bartholomei sumptu Bianchini maxima matrom hic vivit manibus, Francia, picta tuis*".

Francia's most constant supporter was Giovanni Bentivoglio: in the altar-piece for his chapel in S. Giacomo Maggiore, where the enthroned Madonna is in the centre, with angels and saints in attendance, the angels are portraits of some of the Bentivoglii children: and at the time of his patron's flight from the city, Francia was engaged for him upon the frescoes of the Life of S. Cecilia, in the then newly erected oratory of the saint adjoining the same church.

In a representation of the Nativity, which is one of the artist's happiest productions, with SS. Augustin and Francis as the attendant saints, Bentivoglio's son, Antonio Galeazzo, who had given the commission for the picture, kneels in the costume of a pilgrim of the Red Cross, in adoration of the Infant Saviour. Girolamo di Casio, poet and goldsmith, whose writings abound with eulogies of his friend, stands opposite, in the garb of a shepherd, and Francia depicted his own portrait in the figure of S. Francis, his patron saint, at the back of the group. The picture, removed from the church of the Misericordia, has been placed in the Pinacoteca.

In the Crucifixion, formerly in the Accademia at Bologna, now in the Louvre, he introduced the allegory of the Patriarch Job, recumbent at the foot of the Cross, pointing upwards to a scroll, whereon is inscribed, "*Majora sustinuit ipse*": the picture apparently is the Crucifixion named by Vasari (iii., 542).

The dignified simplicity of expression Francia's pencil was guided by, is seen in the altar-piece, painted for the church of San Frediano at Lucca, which, together with its lunette, is now in the National Gallery in London; the *Pieta* in the lunette is adapted from his picture of the Crucifixion in the Accademia at Parma, and, in the earnest devotion of its spiritualized sentiment, no more characteristic instance of Francia's talent is extant: the painting is remarkable for the signal skill of the *chiar'-oscuro* wherewith the radiant glow of its colour is subdued. Another work in England calling for particular notice, on account of the engraving Francia made of it, is the *Baptism of Our Saviour*, bought by Charles I. with the Mantuan collection, and now in Hampton Court Palace: a duplicate of the picture is in the Dresden Gallery.

At the time of Napoleon's sweeping raid upon the treasures of Italy, the works of the Caracci were selected in preference to those of Francia, which, with some few excep-

tions, were not taken to Paris, and they consequently escaped much of the loss and injury, so many of the works of the great masters suffered from in the removal.

The death of Alexander VI., on the 18th August, 1503, which created a general feeling of relief throughout Italy, was speedily succeeded by important changes at the Court of the Bentivoglii. The rule of but a few weeks' duration of Pius III. was followed by the election of Julius II. in the month of October, 1503, who, from the commencement of his Pontificate, pursued, with determined energy, his efforts to bring the Italian States into subjection to the Church. He started from Rome in the autumn of 1506, with the intention of taking possession of Bologna, and he issued a bull from Cesena, on the 10th October, against Giovanni Bentivoglio, declaring him an enemy to the Church, abandoning his goods to pillage, with the grant of plenary indulgence to whomsoever should put him to death. The despotic rule of government of Giovanni Bentivoglio, and the dissolute extravagance and oppression of his sons, had for a long antecedent period aroused the discontent of the citizens of Bologna, who were prepared to welcome the advent of the Pope. Threatened on all sides by the neighbouring states, which one by one withdrew their promised support of his cause and joined the Papal troops as they advanced with rapid marches upon the city, Bentivoglio, on the 2nd November, fled with his family to the French camp, eventually taking refuge in Milan, where he died in February, 1508.

With the dispersion of society which ensued at Bologna, Francia's life for some time must have been a troubled one; Raphael's commiseration is told in the concluding words of encouragement in a letter he wrote to him, presently to be quoted. Francia's merits, however, attracted the attention of Julius II., who excepted him from the banishment where-with he visited the followers and friends of the Bentivoglii, and retained him in his position of Master of the Mint,

entrusting him with the making the dies for the new coinage he issued. The legend Francia had to engrave on the reverse, "BONONIA PER IVLIVM A TYRANNO LIBERATA", must have aggravated the sorrow Vasari tells us he experienced at the loss of his liberal patron: Francia's great skill as a metal chaser is seen in the fine medallion he executed of Bentivoglio, a similar portrait of the Pope being regarded as equal to it in excellence.

A strong bond of sympathy had been created between Francia and Raphael: Timoteo Viti, a native of Urbino, went to Bologna in 1490, and was admitted into Francia's workshops, to acquire the knowledge of metal chasing; after remaining there five years, we learn from an entry in Francia's diary, written in the affectionate words so characteristic of his kindness, that his pupil left him on the 4th April, 1495. The incentive for the intimacy of the two great painters originated, we can imagine, in the account of the five happy years passed at Bologna, which Timoteo talked about in glowing terms on his return to Urbino. Raphael was then a lad of twelve years old; his father had recently died, and Timoteo was consulted respecting his art education. The acquaintance with Raphael may have been made on some journey by Francia to Florence; there is nothing in evidence to corroborate the supposed visit of Raphael to Bologna, unless it occurred in his early days, on his having completed a Nativity he received a commission for from Giovanni Bentivoglio. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their *Life of Raphael* (ii., 346), are of opinion that Raphael accompanied Leo X. on his visits to Florence and Bologna in 1515.

A picture of Lucretia was painted for the Duke of Urbino by Francia: the transmission of it was accompanied by a highly laudatory sonnet, addressed "All' eccellente pictore Raffaello Sanzio, Zeusi del nostro secolo. Di me Francesco Raibolini decto il Francia"; with the sonnet Francia sent his portrait to Raphael. In a letter acknow-

ledging the receipt of Francia's portrait, the date being variously interpreted, Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their *Life of Raphael* (ii., 348), ascribing it to 1516, Raphael apologises for his own portrait not being yet finished, and begs Francia's acceptance of another drawing of a Nativity, requesting the completion of certain promised pictures, concluding, "meantime be of good courage and prudent, as is your wont, and be assured that I sympathise with you in all your afflictions as if they were my own. Continue to love me, as I love you, with all heart." After an early drawing of the Nativity received from Raphael, the delicate engraving of the subject by Marcantonio Raimondi (B. xiv., 16) most probably was executed, shortly previous to his leaving Bologna. The matters referred to in the letter tell us that considerable intercourse was carried on between the correspondents.

In 1510 Francia's pupil Marcantonio Raimondi went to Rome, provided, no doubt, with a personal introduction to Raphael, and the ready welcome he was received with, is manifest from the employment of engraving the master's works he forthwith became engaged in. The last link in the evidence of the relations which existed between the two painters is the consignment by Raphael, in 1516, of the altar-piece of S. Cecilia he had completed for Cardinal Pucci, who was afflicted with deafness, as a votive offering for the chapel of Beata Elena dell' Olio, in the church of San Giovanni in Monte, for his friend to superintend the placing it. The picture arrived in safety at Bologna, and was duly fixed in its position over the altar: it has since been removed to the Pinacoteca.

Francia died on the 5th January, 1518, and in the memoir of his life by Vasari the unauthenticated rumour first was published, that his death had been hastened, through jealousy of the praise bestowed upon the altar-piece his friend had consigned to him, a sentiment unknown to Francia's nature. The picture is far from being one of

Raphael's happiest efforts, and of itself refutes any such occasion for envy. Malvasia, in his life of Francia, in his "Vite de' Pittori Bolognesi" (Bologna, 1678), contradicts the story as being totally groundless.

Jacopo Alessandro Calvi, in his "Memorie della vita ed opere di Francesco Raibolini" (Bologna, 1802), first gave a description of the prints he considered were by the hand of Francia, the Baptism of Our Saviour (B. xiv., 22) being amongst them. From their association in design, and resemblance in drawing, with his pictures, we are alone enabled to form our judgment respecting Francia's engravings, there being no mark upon any of them, affirming their authorship. The only known signature is on the print of the Madonna (P. v., 201, 2) holding the Infant Saviour, seated on a dwarf pedestal, attended by SS. Francis and Antony of Padua on either side, marked with the monogram "DAF", on the front of the pedestal, but which bears no intelligible connection with the master's name. Impressions from three different states of the plate are in the British Museum; the faces are full of the expression and feeling of Francia's drawing; the timidity of the lips and the inquiring nervousness of the eyes, which are such marked characteristics of his pencil, are conspicuous in all the faces.

The engravings of Francesco Francia, bearing neither signature nor date to aid in their identification, are distinguishable upon examination, in the maturity of thought and expression in their careful finish. But owing to their close resemblance to the works of his talented pupil Marcantonio Raimondi, they were mingled with them by Bartsch, and included by him in the general collection of the pupil's prints.

The Baptism of Our Saviour, which is the most finished of Francesco Francia's engravings, is of the same design as his picture of the subject in Hampton Court Palace, upon which the "Aurifex" is added to the signature. The print of Lucretia (B. xv., 458, 4) is of equally delicate execution;

Vasari (iii., 544) tells us, as we have mentioned, that Francia sent a painting of the subject, at the instigation of his friend Raphael, to the Duke of Urbino. The group of S. Catherine with the wheel of her martyrdom and S. Lucia with her eyes in a salver (B. xiv., 121; P. v., 202, 3), is a study, in Passavant's opinion, for Francia's picture of the Madonna and Saints in the Museum at Berlin.

Metal chasing and engraving were material sources of revenue in Francia's studio. Of the two hundred pupils who are said to have been indebted to him for instruction, a considerable proportion were employed in the various branches of the goldsmith's art, as we know was the case with his son and nephew, and Marcantonio Raimondi. Timoteo Viti had been sent to Bologna to be instructed in metal chasing, and the demand for the products of engraving had opened up a remunerative opportunity for its pursuit as a distinct profession.

Bartsch classifies, at the end of his fifteenth volume, the productions of different unknown engravers of the time of Marcantonio, which bear letters or monograms. The first selection consists of seven prints, catalogued under the initials "I. F.", wherewith some of them are marked, which Bartsch states had always been taken for pieces of Marcantonio, executed by him in his first manner whilst with Francesco Francia; the initials are those of the name of Francia's son Jacopo. Francia's nephew Giovanni Battista, and Giulio, another of his relations, were known as painters, and likewise applied themselves to the occupation of metal chasing and engraving in the master's workshop. With the exception of the seven examples selected and described by Bartsch, the remainder of the Bolognese prints were included by him in the fourteenth volume of his "*Peintre-Graveur*."

From the extreme rarity of impressions in pure condition of these early Bolognese prints, it is almost impossible to arrive at an acquaintance with the refinement of execu-

tion upon the copper, which was attained by Francia and the pupils he instructed. The prints by the master, of Our Saviour's Baptism (B. xiv., 22), SS. Catherine and Lucia (B. xiv., 121), and Lucretia (B. xv., 458, 4), scarcely exist in a condition enabling us to form an estimate of the great delicacy of finish taught and acquired in Francia's school. An example, of what once was a brilliant impression of the Baptism, is in the British Museum; amidst the repair of the paper, and the attempted restoration it has undergone, many portions of the original work remain uninjured, sufficient to demonstrate how fine must have been the print when first it was issued. An impression of the Lucretia in an early state, the plate having subsequently been almost entirely reworked, is in the writer's collection.

Francia's son Jacopo was talented as a painter, and remained in his father's studio, assisting him in the pictures he was engaged upon, and continued to reside at Bologna for some years after his father's death. Passavant surmises that subsequently he sought employment at Rome as an engraver, his presence there being indicated by a copy of Marcantonio's print of Our Saviour at Supper in the House of the Pharisee, marked I. F, with the date 1530 (B. xiv., 23), and by two arabesques, portion of a series (B. xiv., 564-583) by Agostino Veneziano, which have the same I. F initials engraved upon them.

The close adherence observed by the students in the school of Francia to the instruction he trained them in, renders it extremely difficult, in the absence of any mark for guidance, to designate individually the engravers of the different works that were produced at Bologna. A coldness of tone and monotony of drawing pervades those of Francia's son Jacopo, notwithstanding his successful imitation of his father's manner. The print most demonstrative of his talent is the first in Bartsch's list of a group of five Saints (B. xv., 456, 1): a female saint in the centre holds before her a tablet, whereon there is a representation of the

Madonna with the Infant Saviour, the intention of the composition being evidently for a votive altar-piece, as we gather from the inscription, "AB OMNI MALO DEFENDE TUUM POPULUM".

An allegorical representation of the youthful Saviour recumbent on the Cross (P. v., 224, 11), with two angel children in attendance, bears no mark, but is by the same hand as two other subjects, of Christian Charity (B. xv., 457, 3), and the figure of a Female holding a disc (P. v., 224, 14), both of which have upon them the I. F. letters. The Holy Family with the spindle (B. xv., 457, 2), although unsigned, is clearly engraved by Jacopo Francia, and so likewise is the representation of Bacchus and his Attendants (B. xv., 460, 7), treated with much animation, and, in this respect, one of the most interesting of his compositions.

In their accuracy of outline, and the regular incision of their shading, the prints of the school of Bologna give us the first intimation of the altered style of working upon the metal, then commencing to be practised. Notwithstanding the increased correctness of their cutting, we lose, in the precision of their execution, the sketch-like drawing which hitherto had been the characteristic of the productions of the early Italian painter-engravers. They are the precursors of the abandonment by the painters of the habit of submitting, with their own hand, their original thoughts to the metal, and of the institution of a class of artificers, trained in the use of the graver as a distinct and separate employment, which in direct succession to these works of the engravers at Bologna became inaugurated at Rome under Raphael's guidance and direction.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

GERMAN AND ITALIAN ENGRAVING.

GREATLY as we are indebted to German research, for the light that has been thrown upon the discovery and progress of the art of engraving, which we have thus far traced, from the origin of its use in Florence, to its exercise by Francesco Francia and his pupils in Bologna, we have to accept with much reservation the judgment pronounced upon its history in Italy. The German writers have enriched our knowledge of the subject, through their industrious examination of the municipal and other archives, in bringing together many of the particulars connected with the commencement and development of the art of engraving in Europe, and by their learned and careful elucidation of much that was previously buried in obscurity ; but their criticisms, owing to the uncertainty the question is surrounded with, are materially narrowed to the eliciting the evidence, that their nation has the prior claim to the discovery of the utilization of the process of taking imprints upon paper from engraved metal plates, and to the contention, that German skill was step by step the pioneer in every access of its improvement in Italy.

“ *Le Peintre-Graveur* ” of Adam Bartsch (1803-21) is invaluable for the accuracy of its descriptions, and its painstaking catalogues of the various schools of engraving. But

the thirteenth volume, published in 1811, comprising the works of the early Italian painter-engravers, besides its shortcomings, owing to the imperfect knowledge then arrived at, has numerous mistaken ascriptions, and is written with ill-concealed vexation at the title of precedence in the art of engraving, which previously had been maintained in Germany, being impugned by the Abbé Zani's recognition, in 1797 of the print from the Florence pax of the Coronation of the Virgin, and consequently by the discovery, that from a skilfully executed plate an impression had been taken upon paper in Italy in 1452, which was the accepted date of it, there being then no print from an incised metal plate attributable to the hand of an artificer in Germany of so early a period. Wherever practicable, Bartsch, in following the arguments of his predecessor Heineken, raises the inference, that any excellence of workmanship, in the products of engraving in Italy, derived its inspiration from, and was due to German influence.

Ottley, in his "Inquiry," discusses at considerable length the character of Bartsch's account of the early Italian prints, designating it (p. 347) "as fabricated with more ingenuity than fairness, for the purpose of depriving Italy of the honours due to her as inventress of chalcography, and transferring them to Germany."

Johann David Passavant, born at Frankfort in 1787, was appointed Inspector of the Städel Museum in the city, where he died in 1861. Amongst other writings, he compiled, with great ability, a supplement in six volumes to the *Peintre-Graveur* of Adam Bartsch, by the same title of "*Le Peintre-Graveur*" (1860-4), its publication not having been completed until some time after his death. His examination of the engravings of the early Italian masters, commencing with the impression from the Florence pax, assumed to be of the workmanship of Tommaso Finiguerra, is continued in an under-current of criticism, which culminates with the

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declaration, that the skill the Italian engravers were possessed of, was attained, for the most part, through their having benefited by the teaching, and followed the example that had been set to them by their German contemporaries.

Having narrated the circumstances respecting the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin, Passavant adds (i., 197):—"A remarkable coincidence with reference to it was the presence in Florence, precisely in 1450, of Roger van der Weyden, the celebrated pupil of Van Eyck, who painted at the time a picture of the Madonna for the Medici. One cannot doubt that he paid a visit to the famous goldsmith, Maso Finiguerra, to see the beautiful pax of the Coronation of the Virgin he was then at work upon." The picture may have been painted, and the visit to Finiguerra may have been made, although Passavant's statements that they were so are purely conjectural; there is not the slightest authority for either of them, nor for the account of what took place at the visit, as described in the words of Passavant, "that the Flemish painter, seeing the complicated process employed by the Florentine artist to procure imprints in sulphur, to be filled with a black pigment, and thus to judge of the effect of his work, showed him the very simple method of obtaining the same result, by pressing the plate direct upon moistened paper."

Passavant's argument of the indebtedness of Finiguerra and his successors to German guidance, and his comments seriatim upon the early Italian engravings, are carried down to Marcantonio Raimondi, with, in his case, the additional assertion, too palpably inaccurate to need refutation, that many of his finest prints had erroneously been ascribed to him, and that several of them were, in fact, engraved by the little German masters, the pupils and successors of Albert Dürer.

One of the latest additions to the literature of the subject is the essay, before referred to, by Kolloff upon Baccio Baldini published in Meyer's "*Künstler Lexikon*," wherein

the writer is fully in accord with Passavant, in the motive to reduce the position held by the art of engraving in Italy in the fifteenth century, to one of subserviency to German influence. The essay has the merit of bringing together an account of the early Italian prints the name of Baccio Baldini had been connected with. The material argument pervading the essay is to prove, that long prior to the discovery by the Italian goldsmith of the process of taking an imprint upon paper from the plate he was working upon, of which the impression from the Florence pax of the Coronation of the Virgin in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris is the first known example, the German artists had brought the practice of engraving to a scientific state of perfection, in which they far excelled their southern rivals; and that, in fact, to the Master of 1466, Martin Schöngauer, Albert Dürer, and the other eminent artists of Germany, the Italians were principally indebted for any improvement they acquired in their knowledge and skill in the use of the graver. The argument falls short of the question raised by Kolloff, as the date of the pax, admittedly the production, in 1452 or 1455, of a goldsmith in Italy fully accomplished in his craft, is by some years in advance in point of time of any known work of the earliest of the German engravers he refers to.

Within a recent period, however, two prints have attracted attention, with dates prior to 1452 or 1455 upon them.

M. Jules Renouvier, in his "*Treatise des Types et des Manières des Maîtres-Graveurs (XV. siècle)*," published at Montpellier in 1853, discussed the subject of the origin of engraving, with the opinion, that the print from the pax of Finiguerra established the claim of Italy to precedence in the discovery of the use the art of metal chasing was applicable to. In August, 1856, however, he contributed a paper to the twenty-fourth number of the "*Publications de la Société Archéologique de Montpellier*," wherein

he gave an account of seven impressions from incised metal plates, which had fallen into his hands. He described them as printed upon cotton paper, bearing the water-mark of three conjoined circles, and as forming part of a series of a Passion of Our Saviour, considered to be of German workmanship: the prints are 103 millimètres high by 80 millimètres wide, and upon the last of them, of the Scourging of Our Saviour, there is the date of 1446. The style of their workmanship he explained to be like that of the xylographic books, "*des formes courtes, des têtes grosses et inégales, des attitudes mouvementées et mal campés, des expressions grimacières. A ces traits on peut déjà reconnaître l'école allemande.*"

Passavant, in his "*Peintre-Graveur*" (i., 200), briefly mentions the seven prints, with the remark that they are by "*un maître de la haute-Allemagne, d'un travail assez archaïque et rude, les contours sont fortement accusés et les rares indications d'ombres consistent en hachures, courtes et irrégulières dans les chairs et les détails d'architecture, mais plus allongées dans les draperies. Le dessin, sans être exact ou bien compris, n'en révèle pas moins une certaine observation de la nature, l'expression des têtes est vraie, très vive et frise parfois la caricature.*" In Dr. Wiltshire's catalogue of "*Early Prints in the British Museum, German and Flemish Schools*" (ii., 133), a résumé of the account of the prints is given.

The paper they are printed upon is considered to be of a time subsequent to the year 1446, and it is presumed consequently that the impressions were taken from the plates, at a date later than that the print of the Scourging of Our Saviour is marked with.

The prints have since been acquired by the Prussian Government, and are now in the Kupferstichkabinet at Berlin.

In a sale at Leipsig in 1872 of early prints and woodcuts belonging to M. Weigel, there was a German en-

graving by an unknown master, with the representation of the Virgin surrounded by a choir of angels, marked with a Gothic **D** and the date **Mccccli**. The print is mentioned by Passavant (i., 201), and there are copies of it, in Naumann's "Archiv. f. die Zeichnenden Kunst," iv Jahr 1858, in Weigel's "Die Anfänge der Druckerkunst," Leipzig, 1866, and in the Weigel sale catalogue, 1872. The impression was carefully examined, prior to the sale, by amateurs who were competent to form an opinion, and the figures were pronounced to have undergone alteration, and to be no longer in their original state, the engraving being very generally regarded as of a later date than that assigned to it by the numerals upon it (see Dr. Wiltshire's Catalogue, ii., 137).

Apart from the question of the authenticity of the dates of 1446 and 1451, and of the periods when the impressions upon paper were respectively taken from the plates, and of the date, whether 1452 or 1455, of the print from the pax of the Coronation of the Virgin, the Italian print is of far higher artistic excellence than any known metal engraving executed in Germany, either prior, or some few years subsequent to it, and bears the evidence on the face of it, that prolonged and patient exercise of his art must have been pursued by the engraver, before he could have attained to the perfection of finish developed in the plate it was printed from.

The productions of the painter-engravers of Italy cannot be estimated by the principles of workmanship acted upon simultaneously in Germany. The engravings of the early anonymous Florentine masters, and those of their immediate successors, Botticelli, Mantegna, Moceto, and their contemporaries, are totally distinct in the character of their execution, from that which prevailed on the northern side of the Alps. The charm of these Italian prints consists in their thorough independence of all defined rules of engraving; the freedom of cutting upon the copper, their authors

had acquired such skill in the exercise of, remained unfettered by any mechanical process, and the same delicate handling, observable in their drawings, was adhered to in the use of the new medium at their command, for the more permanent preservation of their compositions.

According to Kolloff (577), "the old Florentine engravings are the offshoots of the early renaissance. By the side of subjects from the Bible and the legend, of mystic dogmatism and symbolism, we have the forms of classical mythology and allegory wherewith Dante had illustrated the Christian tradition, and, by bringing them into combination with secular subjects, introduced the creation of very remarkable productions. This particular tendency did not develop the same excellence in the engravings, as in the paintings of the time; but if the engravings cannot claim a value and importance, equal to that of the paintings, many an interesting leaf of great significance is found amongst them. The selection and the simplification of the forms of nature, the endeavour after the beautiful, often successfully, in modulation of drawing, the representation of dignity and gracefulness of action, and the elevation of treatment in the folds of drapery, bear testimony to aspirations after nobler and more ideal excellence. In these purely artistical respects the old Florentine engravers far excel their German contemporaries."

In resuming his commendation of German technicality, Kolloff proceeds with the prejudiced and erroneous argument, refuted by each statement and name he adduces in support of it, "that at the commencement of the sixteenth century, the methods of engraving in use in Italy were still so immature and unsettled, that they were abandoned, so soon as Albrecht Dürer's prints, in which the strokes, according to the forms to be represented, are modulated and curved in the simplest manner, became known. Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, Zoan Andrea, Nicoletto da Modena, Giovanni Baptista del Porto, Benedeto Montagna,

Girolamo Moceto, and Marcantonio in his first period, applied themselves to copy the engravings of the German master—to study, acquire, and use his method.”

The improvement in the art of engraving in Italy, which Kolloff and the German writers his predecessors contend was due to the influence and example of their countrymen, has to be considered in the reverse of the proposition,—whether, in fact, the German artists were not indebted to the advantage of their intercourse with their southern rivals, for the knowledge they derived from them, of creative principles of design, and for a considerable increase of refinement and artistic skill, both in drawing and execution, in their acquisition of the free, graceful method of using the graver pursued by the painters of Italy.

Mention has been made, in the account of Jacobo de' Barbari (p. 293), of the training Albert Dürer in his early days received from the Venetian artist. The source of Albert Dürer's knowledge in delineating the figure, which he tells us of in the manuscript of the preface to his book on Human Proportion, is manifest in his imitative adoption of the manner of Jacobo de' Barbari, whose instruction of him in the use of the burin was far in advance of what he previously had learned, either in his father's workshop, or in the studio of Michel Wolgemut. Judging from the incontrovertible evidence the prints themselves afford us, in the comparison of the print of Adam and Eve (B. vii., 30, 1) of the German engraver, with that of the Mars and Venus of his instructor (B. vii., 525, 20), we see how material was the guidance in working upon the copper,¹ Albert Dürer derived from his Italian friend, the “graceful painter” as he calls him, who had taken

¹ Dr. Thausing, in his “Life of Albert Dürer” (English translation, vol. i., pp. 193-239), pronounced Albert Dürer's knowledge of copperplate engraving to have been acquired from his master, Michel Wolgemut, by

up his abode in Nuremberg. From the estimate Albert Dürer has enabled us, by his own writings, to form of his character, we know that he would unhesitatingly have admitted the slightest assistance others had rendered him.

Dr. Thausing, in his *Life of Albert Dürer*, assumes, from his interpretation of a remark of Albert Dürer, that a previous visit had been paid by him to Venice, eleven years prior to 1506, and at the commencement of the twelfth chapter, Dr. Thausing writes, "Italy did not fail to exercise over Dürer, in the course of the year (1506) and more spent by him beyond the Alps, that subtle influence, which elevates the understanding and expands the mind," adding that "the essential nature of his art remained untouched by foreign influences, and he returned to Nuremberg, un-Italianized and true to his original principles."

In Albert Dürer's copperplate engravings, the advantage he derived from his intercourse with his friends in Venice is made apparent, in the year after his return from his visit in 1506, in his sixteen small plates of the Passion of Our Saviour: the Deposition from the Cross (B. 13) is dated 1507: the series was not completed until 1512, that date being inscribed on the print of the Resurrection (B. 17): in the Agony on the Cross, dated 1508 (B. 24), we have an adaptation of the figure of S. John, from the Mantegna Entombment (B. xiii., 229, 3). Another appropriation, from Mantegna's engraving of the Fight of Tritons (B. xiii., 17), is of the Nereid seated on the tail of one of the combatants, the figure being copied, without variation, in Dürer's Effects of Jealousy (B. 73); a careful drawing made by Dürer in its entirety of the Mantegna engraving (B. xiii., 238, 17) is in the Albertina at Vienna.

In the woodcuts, however, of his large Passion of Our

whom he considered the various prints marked with the letter W, attributed to Wenzel von Olmutz, were engraved, and that Albert Dürer's prints, corresponding in subject, were copied from them.

Saviour, and in those of the Life of the Virgin, we see how material was the improvement both in drawing and engraving, Albert Dürer had derived from his association with the Italian artists. Many of the prints of each series engraved, as we learn from the dates they bear, subsequent to his return, are, in their far more delicate rendering of the incidents represented, and the altered method of their cutting, in striking contrast with the hard expressionless character of the earlier subjects. The superiority in composition and beauty of finish, in these later prints, is especially observable, amongst several others, in the Ascension of Our Saviour in the series of the large Passion, and the Assumption of the Virgin, in the series of her Life: both are remarkable for their Italian sentiment, and the enlarged freedom of their engraving. They prove how earnestly Albert Dürer had availed himself of the opportunities of deriving instruction from the Venetian painters, and how much he had gained in refinement, both of tone and expression, from the study of their works.





CHAPTER XXIX.

MARCANTONIO RAIMONDI.



THE important position engraving attained in Rome, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, was due to the active interest taken by Raphael Sanzio in its promotion : the arrival of Francesco Francia's favourite pupil Marcantonio Raimondi in the city, with an introduction to the great painter was followed by the immediate recognition of the talent he was the master of, and its rapid development under Raphael's superintendence.

Of Marcantonio Raimondi's parentage, or of the family he was connected with, no particulars have been ascertained. We know only that he was a native of Bologna, and was admitted in his early years into the school of Francia, where he applied himself exclusively to the acquisition of metal chasing and engraving as a profession. From the date upon the first known print by his hand, executed whilst he was a lad in his master's workshop, his birth, it is considered, occurred about 1488.

Heineken, in his "Dictionnaire des Artistes" (vol. i., 275), through an erroneous reading, subsequently explained by Bartsch, of the inscription "1506 AP. 9," upon the print of Apollo and Hyacinth (B. xiv., 348), interpreted it to bear the intimation that Marcantonio was of the age of nineteen on its publication in 1506. Marcantonio, however,

has himself left us tolerably distinct testimony, in the dated signatures he added to the engravings, which during the years 1505 and 1506 he was engaged in producing, that the attribution of his birth to 1487-8 must approximately be correct. The first of them, in illustration of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe (B. xiv., 322), with the year 1505 inscribed upon it, has all the qualities of youthful workmanship. The examples of the ensuing year, with Marcantonio's monogram and the date of 1506 upon three of them, tell of the steady progress he was making; the subjects are noticeably such as a lad in his eighteenth year would be likely to make choice of, and sustain Passavant's opinion (vi., 4), that these prints of 1506 were engraved from Marcantonio's own designs. They show how much he had improved, in their more careful cutting, since his completion of the Pyramus and Thisbe of the previous year; other prints are clearly contemporary with them, from the similarity of their style, and from their bearing the large monogram, used only by Marcantonio in the first days of his studentship.

In 1513 a poem was published by Alessandro Achillini, under the name of Giovanni Philotheo Achillini, entitled "*Il Viridario; nel quale nomina i litterati bolognesi e di altre città,*" Bologna, Plato de Benedictis, quarto, 1513. In the preface, the author informs us he had commenced the composition of his poem so early as 1504, and the following mention of Marcantonio occurs in it:—

I canonise also Marcantonio Raimondi

For his emulation of the sacred precepts of the ancients

Both in drawing, and in the use of the burin,

Which he makes us acquainted with in his beautiful
compositions.

The portrait of me he has just completed the engraving of,
Leaves it in doubt which is the most lifelike.¹

¹ Consacro anchor Marcantonio Raimondi
Che imita degli antiqui le sante orme

We learn through the verses how gratified the poet was with his portrait, and it has been argued, from the accomplished skill he accredited the engraver with the possession of, that Marcantonio, at the time of the publication of the poem, was of established reputation, and that his birth consequently must have taken place earlier than 1488. The portrait called by Bartsch the Guitar Player (B. 469), inscribed "PHILOHEO", is carefully finished in its execution, corresponding in the date of its workmanship with the prints produced by Marcantonio on his first arrival in Rome.¹ As Achillini was resident in Bologna, the portrait was most probably there engraved in 1509-10, preceding Marcantonio's departure, confirming the opinion that he did not finally quit the home of his nativity, until he started on his way to the imperial city.

In further support of the argument, that Marcantonio was born at an earlier date than 1488, his portrait by Raphael, as one of the bearers of the Pope's chair, in the fresco of the expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple,

Col disegno, e bollin molto è profondo
 Come se veden sue voghe e riche forme
 Hamme retratto in rame, como io scrivo,
 Ch' en dubio di noi frende quale è vivo.

The last line recalls the inscription on Raphael's tomb in the Pantheon at Rome :—

Ille hic est Raphael, timuit quò sospite vinci
 Rerum magna parens, et moriente, mori.

¹ In the Uffizi at Florence there is a portrait of the poet, nearly life-size, in black chalk heightened with red, attributed to Francia, bearing the inscription, "M^r Alex^o Achilin. An XXIII." Passavant in his mention of it (vi., 41) says that it might be by Marcantonio, but adds in a note that "Crescimbeni, in his 'Commentarj all' Istoria della Volgus Poesia,' vol. ii., p. 11, lib. vi., p. 315, citing on the subject 'Cafer. Synth. Vetust.,' p. 411, states that Achillini died at Bologna the 29th September, 1512, at the age of nearly fifty years. In 1485, therefore, in which year, according to the above date, the poet was of the age of twenty-three, Marcantonio could not have drawn his portrait."

painted about 1514, is interpreted as being the representation of a man thirty, rather than twenty-six years old. But Vasari (v., 492) tells us that "whilst yet a youth" the portrait was taken; and the works Marcantonio was in 1505-6 employed upon, are very distinctly characteristic of their being by the hand of a youth of the age of seventeen or eighteen, and fully support the opinion that 1487-8 has to be accepted as the period of his birth.

No additional details are extant relative to Marcantonio's occupation in Bologna, beyond what is to be gathered from the pages of Vasari, and from the associations the prints of his early years are connected with. Vasari (v., 403) writes: "Whilst Francesco Francia was occupied with painting at Bologna, he brought forward, from amongst his numerous pupils, a youth named Marcantonio, distinguished above all of them for his ingeniousness: having been many years with Francia, he acquired the cognomen of '*de Franci*.'" The particulars supplied by Vasari respecting Marcantonio, prior to his arrival in Rome, and of the interest he took in the woodcuts of Albert Dürer, and of his communications with their author, are so confused and misleading, and so indefinite in their dates, that it is impossible to pronounce distinctly upon the facts, and there is no other source whence information is derivable.

Vasari writes (v., 404) that "Marcantonio, having conceived the desire, as many have done, to go into the world to see different things, and the system pursued by the artificers in other countries, went, with the good wishes of Francia, to Venice, where he was well received by the artificers of the city. At the same time there arrived in Venice some Flemings, with numerous copper-plate engravings and woodcuts by Albert Dürer, which were seen by Marcantonio exposed for sale in the Piazza of San Marco: astonished at the manner of cutting them, and the plan pursued by Albert, he spent upon these prints nearly all the money he had brought with him from

Bologna, and amongst others he purchased the *Passion of Jesus Christ*, engraved on thirty-six wood-blocks, printed on four sheets, which had been completed a short time previously by Albert; the work, commencing with the fall of Adam and his expulsion from Paradise by the angel, finishes with the Descent of the Holy Spirit." With the addition to the foregoing particulars of the dates affixed by Marcantonio upon some few of his prints;—upon those executed in Bologna in 1505-6, upon the *Mars and Venus* of 1508, and of 1510 upon the group of the three soldiers disturbed whilst bathing, from Michelangelo's cartoon—we have the limit of all that is known respecting Marcantonio, prior to his going to Rome in 1510.

Amidst the various problematical accounts by different writers, it has been stated that Marcantonio left Bologna, on the dispersion of the Court at the close of the year 1506, and made his way to Venice: the suggestion that he resided in Venice, for some time prior to the end of 1508, originated in the supposition that he there engraved his print of *Mars and Venus* (B. 345), dated "1508 . 16 D" (December). The design of the group is evidently after Andrea Mantegna; and the landscape, in its correspondence with the style of Giorgione, and the introduction of buildings similar to those in Albert Dürer's engravings, which had become so popular in Venice since the distribution there made of them by the German master in 1506, invest the print with a Venetian character. Zanetti, in his *Calcographie*, names 1509 as the probable year of Marcantonio's visit to Venice: there is considerable doubt whether it must not have been even subsequent to that year, judging from the date of the publication by Albert Dürer of his thirty-six woodcuts of the *Passion of Our Saviour*, two of the series having the year 1510 upon them. Vasari tells us Marcantonio, on the occasion of his visit to Venice, purchased the woodcuts, "which had been completed a short time previously;" the visit apparently was brought to its termination through

the expenditure of his money in the purchase, which necessitated his return to Bologna.

Throughout the troubles that ensued in Bologna, upon the occupation of the city by the Papal troops, Marcantonio evidently remained with Francesco Francia. The prints of his early years produced, as we see from the designs of them, in Francia's studio, must, from their large number, have occupied a lengthened time in their execution, affording confirmation of the opinion, that Marcantonio did not finally quit the place of his nativity until he started on his journey to Rome, staying, perhaps, by the way, for a short time at Florence. The welcome he met with from Raphael in the imperial city, where the remainder of his life was passed, except, probably, a short period at the end of it, was speedily cemented into closer intimacy, through his new master's admiration of the skill he displayed.

The fresco Michelangelo painted in the Palazzo della Signoria at Florence, referred to in the previous account of Leonardo da Vinci, was finished in 1505: the subject of it was the surprise by the Florentine troops of the Pisan soldiers, whilst bathing in the Arno. Of three of the figures Marcantonio executed an engraving, the subject being a group of soldiers on the bank by the riverside, surprised by the Florentines, who are seen approaching through the wood in the distance on the left. The engraving, catalogued by Bartsch as *Les Grimpeurs* (B. 487), either after Marcantonio's own drawing, or from one Raphael made of the fresco during his stay in Florence in 1507-8, which he handed to Marcantonio to work from, is the representative example of the highest excellence of Marcantonio's early manner. Ottley (783) remarks: "I cannot help suspecting Marcantonio's engraving to have been copied after a drawing, which Raphael had made from the said cartoon during one of his visits to Florence." The year 1510, inscribed upon it, tells us of the time of Marcantonio's arrival in Rome; we thenceforth cease to derive further

intimation from his prints, as to the period of their execution, no subsequent date being found upon any of them. The background of *Les Grimpeurs*, supplied from a print by the German painter Lucas van Leyden of *Mahomet* and the Monk *Sergius* (B. vii., 405, 126), dated 1508, is significant of Marcantonio's acquaintance with the works of the German masters, in its being the forerunner of the numerous copies he shortly afterwards commenced to make of the Dürer woodcuts he had purchased.

Contemporaneously, within a small cycle of time, apparent in their close resemblance in style to the print of *Les Grimpeurs*, Marcantonio engraved some few other plates, those of *Adam and Eve* (B. 1), *Poetry* (B. 382), and *Lucretia* (B. 192) amongst them, which are unrivalled as masterpieces of the art of the painter-engraver,—an art soon to give place to the altered process of workmanship Marcantonio discovered to be so far more remunerative. Vasari writes of the *Lucretia* (v. 411), that “having arrived at Rome, Marcantonio engraved on copper a very beautiful drawing of Raphael d'Urbino, in which is the Roman *Lucrezia* in the act of slaying herself: he executed this so skilfully, and in such a beautiful manner, that Raphael's friends, having taken it to him, he determined to have some of his own designs engraved.”

The period of Marcantonio's arrival was peculiarly opportune for cementing the intimacy which ensued between Raphael and the young engraver. The Pope had left the city in the autumn of 1510, to carry out the intended subjugation of the Italian States, and was detained by the warfare he was engaged in, during the first half of the ensuing year, his return not taking place until the end of June, 1511. The extensive decorative works placed under the painter's direction were delayed in their progress, owing to the Pope's absence, which interrupted the needed instruction for their conduct, and the consequent leisure thrown upon Raphael's hands, through his inability to

proceed with the commissions he had undertaken, enabled him to devote his time to the utilization of the new medium for his compositions unexpectedly brought to his attention.

The knowledge of the extended use the burin was applicable to, acquired shortly afterwards by Marcantonio, during the progress of the production of his imitations of the woodcuts of Albert Dürer, interrupted the delicate work he commenced his career at Rome in the execution of; but throughout the ensuing decade of his connection with Raphael, and occasionally at a later period, we have the same excellence of drawing, with the frequent reminiscence of his early manner, of which his portrait of Aretino is an illustrative instance.

In 1510 Albert Dürer had completed, as we learn from the dates upon some of them, the thirty-six woodcuts of the Life of Our Saviour, and those of the twenty illustrations of the Life of the Madonna. At the end of each series he subsequently added, to their later publication, his well-known anathema against their imitation, addressed especially to Marcantonio, as follows:—

“Heus tu insidiator: ac alieni laboris: & ingenii surreptor: ne manus temerarias his nostris operibus injicias. cave: Scias enim a gloriosissimo Romanorum Imperatore. Maximiliano nobis cōcessum esse: ne quis suppositicijs formis: has imagines imprimere: seu impressas per imperij limites vendere audeat: q̄ si per cōtemptum: seu avaricie crimen: sec⁹ feceris: post bonorū cōfiscatiōem: tibi maximum periculū subeundum esse certissime scias.”

The circumstances occasioning the publication of this strong remonstrance and warning were sufficient to arouse the keenest irritation. We have previously discussed the piracy of Andrea Mantegna's engravings; and in numerous other instances, both in Italy and Germany, the same system was unscrupulously pursued; but so wholesale an appropriation had never before been attempted. No sooner had the thought and time bestowed by Albert Dürer upon the

composition of the two works resulted in the completion of the woodcuts, of the Life of Our Saviour, and of the Life of the Madonna, than copies of both of them, exactly similar in size and form, in close resemblance of the German master's manner, were engraved on copper by Marcantonio, and published as the originals. According to Vasari (v. 405), "Marcantonio began by copying these engravings of Albert, studying the manner of the lines and every other peculiarity of the prints he had purchased: from their novelty and beauty they were in such repute, that everyone was desirous of acquiring them. Having, therefore, counterfeited in strong lines upon the copper, similar to the cutting of them by Albert in the wood, the whole of the said Passion and Life of Christ in thirty-six prints, and having added the 'A D' mark made use of by Albert so exactly, that no one could know it was done by Marcantonio, they were supposed to be by Albert, and were bought and sold as his work. Intelligence was sent to Albert in Flanders, with one of the counterfeits of the Passion by Marcantonio; Albert fell into such a rage, that, leaving Flanders, he went to Venice, and brought before the Seigniorie his complaint against Marcantonio; but he could obtain nothing further than that Marcantonio should no longer put the name or the mark of Albert upon his work."

The threatened terror of the German Emperor's name was most probably but little heeded in Rome, as the Marcantonio copies of both series continued to be issued, and the plates, worn to exhaustion, were printed from until recently. Extremely detrimental, however, in the interest of art, were the changes that ensued; the deep indentation needed to be made in the copper, for producing fac-similes of the woodcuts, created the knowledge of how far more enduring was the process, and how considerable was the increase in number of impressions capable of being taken by it, than could be so from the finely pencilled lines Marcantonio had been trained by Francia in the use of.

Vasari was, however, but imperfectly acquainted with the circumstances, and the supposed application by Albert Dürer to the Seigniorie rests upon the Italian historian's problematical statement. The announcement of the concession made by the Emperor Maximilian to Albert Dürer, for the publication, and the threat of the consequences which would follow its infringement, seem to have been the limit of any action Albert Dürer had the power to adopt. No mention has been discovered amongst his manuscripts of the steps stated by Vasari to have been taken, and no record of them has been found in the Venetian archives. Dr. Thausing, in his "Life of Dürer" (English edition, i., 334), wrote that he had searched them in vain for any trace of the law proceedings, which were said to have been instituted.

The period, and the place of production, of Marcantonio's copies have been the subject of repeated discussion: the motive, for the suppression of all the dates made use of by Dürer, and for the addition of dates where none are on the woodcuts, baffles any attempt at explanation. The suppression was effected by the omission, in the copies from the Life of Our Saviour, of the numerals 1510, which are upon the woodcuts, of the Expulsion from Paradise (B. vii., 119, 18), and of the Sudarium (B. vii., 38), and of 1509 upon those of Our Saviour before Pilate (B. vii., 31), and the Bearing the Cross (B. vii., 37), and of a similar omission of the same date of 1509¹, which is upon the woodcut of S. Joachim embracing S. Anna (B. vii., 131, 79) in the Life of the Madonna. The added dates are, of 1506 to the copy (B. xiv., 627) of the woodcut of the Annunciation, in the latter series, there being none upon the woodcut (B. vii., 132, 83); and of another inscription, "1506 . A . I .", upon the copy (B. xiv., 643) of the undated

¹ Dr. Thausing, in his "Life of Dürer" (English edition, i., 384), interprets this date, instead of 1509, to be 1504.

woodcut of SS. John the Evangelist and Jerome (B. vii., 139, 112).

The only purpose that can be imagined for these omissions and additions seems to have been from some undefined intention, to invest the copies with a fictitious title of originality in precedence of the woodcuts. The prints produced by Marcantonio in Francia's workshop, when he was a lad of eighteen, the period of the execution of three of them being authenticated by the addition of 1506 to his signature, clearly show, by their inexperience, and by the character, so distinctive of his early manner, that he, in that year, had no knowledge of the deep full method of using the burin, wherewith the copy, with its added date of 1506, of the Albert Dürer woodcut of the Annunciation, and of the copies of the rest of the series of the Life of the Madonna, were executed.

Marcantonio's issue of the copies of the woodcuts of the Life and Passion of Our Saviour could not have been prior to 1510, as we know, from the inscription of that date upon two of the woodcuts, the series was not completed until that year; and at Rome, consequently, we must assume the plates were engraved. The impression, moreover, of the second of the woodcuts, of the Expulsion from Paradise, in the Life and Passion of Our Saviour, made use of by Marcantonio, was from the finished block, there being some rare examples of an earlier state, also dated 1510, with small horizontal lines extending across the back of the figure of Eve, which Albert Dürer removed prior to his publication of the series, and Marcantonio's copy is from an impression in this published state.

His imitations of the woodcuts of the Life of the Madonna were limited to seventeen, the three omissions being of the frontispiece, and of the two subjects at the end of the series, of the Death of the Madonna, and her Assumption. A more critical acquaintance with the German engraver's manner is manifest throughout this latter series, affording

confirmatory proof that the copies of it were executed, subsequent to those of the Life of Our Saviour.

Other fac-similes were engraved and issued by Marcantonio of some of the later woodcuts, showing how little heed was paid at Rome to Albert Dürer's efforts to restrain the piracy. Amongst them are copies of the Adoration of the Magi (B. vii., 116, 3), and of the Mass of S. Gregory (B. vii., 142, 123); both these woodcuts bear the date 1511, which is omitted in the Marcantonio engravings. Of another woodcut of S. Christopher (B. vii., 136, 103), also marked with the year 1511, there is an undescribed copy by Marcantonio of the same size, in the writer's collection, where the date is omitted, and the A.D. monogram is substituted in its place.

A rare volume, of which there is an example in Mr. Huth's library in London, "*Epistole et Evangelii vulgari Hystoriade*" (Folio, Venice, 1512), contains a print from a woodblock, the full size of the page, facing the first leaf of the text, of the Incredulity of S. Thomas, marked with Marcantonio's monogram: it has all the character of his engraving, and is evidently taken from a design by Albert Dürer: the print raises the supposition, that prior to executing upon copper his copies of the Dürer woodcuts, Marcantonio made the attempt to work in the same material as the originals, of which the print in the "*Epistole*" is the only known specimen, and that he abandoned it for the metal, which he was so much better versed in the use of.

An addition by Marcantonio, on the last of his copies of the Life of the Madonna, where she is surrounded by saints and angels¹ (B. xiv., 637), remains yet to be explained; it is the only one of the series to which he affixed his own mono-

¹ Dr. Thausing, in his "*Life of Albert Dürer*" (English edition, ii., 336), states that the engraving is on the back of the plate used for the subject preceding it, and that the plate is still preserved, with others of the series, in a private collection in Italy.

gram, as well as that of Albert Dürer. In the lower left corner a boy angel supports a shield, blank in the woodcut, but to which Marcantonio, in his copy, added a device, given by Bartsch amongst the monograms and marks of the master (B. xiv., plate 9, s.). In the preceding account of the books published at Venice (p. 344), there is the description of a folio volume, "*Vita di Sancti Padri*," printed in 1501, the title-page being one of the most beautiful specimens of decorative printing amongst the Italian books: a black border of arabesque design surrounds the page, with a centre ornamentation printed in red, comprising, within a circle at the top, a double triangle symbolical of the Trinity, with the cypher "ND" in the upper division and "F" in the lower: the two may be read as the initials of "Nordine, Domini, Filii, Spiritus." The cyphers added by Marcantonio to his facsimile (B. xiv., 637) of the woodcut of the Madonna surrounded by saints, are copied from those on the title-page of the "*Vita di Sancti Padri*."

Besides the woodcuts, several of the Dürer copper-plate engravings were reproduced by Marcantonio with surprising accuracy: his copies in reverse of the Madonna with the Butterfly (B. vii., 44) and the Courtier and a Lady (B. vii., 94), are in close resemblance with the Dürer engravings, the A.D. monogram being inserted in the same place upon them: fine impressions of the last two prints are in the British Museum. Passavant (vi., p. 47) gives particulars of several of the copies he was acquainted with, amongst which are the Adam and Eve (B. vii., 1), described by him as of great beauty in its cutting, in Marcantonio's early manner. An engraving by Marcantonio of Our Saviour on the Cross (B. xiv., 645), from a characteristic drawing by Albert Dürer, consisting of three figures, of the Madonna and S. John standing on either side of the crucified Saviour, is highly artistic and dignified in expression: it is of an early period of Marcantonio's Roman manner.

During the decade ending in 1520, Marcantonio's life

was one of continued industry. The large number of original designs Raphael committed to him for reproduction upon the copper, tell of the intimate association that existed between them, which we have the evidence of in the fresco of the Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple, finished about 1514, wherein Raphael, as previously mentioned, introduced the portrait of Marcantonio in the figure of the foremost of the four bearers who support the Pope's chair: in the words of Vasari (v., 442), "Marcantonio, whilst yet a youth, was painted by Raphael as one of the grooms bearing Pope Julius II., in the picture where Oneas the priest is engaged in prayer."

One of the largest of Marcantonio's engravings, published in Rome at an early period of his residence there, is from a drawing made by Raphael for the Mount Parnassus (B. xiv., 247), for the intended decoration of the second wall of the "Stanza della Segnatura," finished in 1513: the superintendence of Raphael is clearly discernible in the execution of the print, which gives his first idea for the composition: many changes were subsequently introduced, and the winged children grouped in the air are omitted in the fresco.¹ Somewhat later in point of time is another large print, the Triumph of Galatea (B. 350), also from a study of Raphael for the fresco in the Farnesina, completed by him in 1514, for his patron Agostino Chigi, the wealthy banker of Rome.

Very many of Raphael's designs are known to us only through Marcantonio's engravings, and their high artistic excellence tells us they were produced under the master's guidance: pre-eminent amongst his compositions preserved in the engravings are the Murder of the Innocents (B. 18), the Martyrdom of S. Felicita (B. 117), Helen

¹ Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle in their *Life of Raphael* (ii., 77), express the opinion that the date of the engraving was subsequent to that of the fresco.

carried away by the Trojans (B. 209), and the Judgment of Paris (B. 245), the latter executed, as we are informed by Vasari, "in such a manner that all Rome was thrown into amazement."

Vasari proceeds to state (v., 411) that "Raphael had in his service for many years a young man who ground his colours, named Baviera, and, as he was possessed of some intelligence, he ordered that Marcantonio should make the engravings, and Baviera should attend to the printing them, to the end that all his designs ('*storie sue*') should be completed, selling them wholesale and retail to whomsoever should wish to buy them: having accordingly set their hand to the work, they printed an infinity of things, which were of very great gain to him."

This extract from Vasari informs us, that Raphael was interested in the profits arising from Marcantonio's engravings. The medium presented to the great painter at the most valuable period of his life, for the utilization of many of his compositions, was taken advantage of as a profitable source of revenue. Vasari (v., 411) adds that "these works brought so much fame to Marcantonio, that they were esteemed, for the excellence of their design, far more than those of the Flemings, and the merchants made large profits by their sale." Besides the supply by Raphael of original drawings, to be reproduced upon the copper, the publication of the engravings from his paintings evidently was made under his supervision. From an examination of the later prints, executed subsequent to Raphael's death in 1520, we can trace the deterioration which speedily ensued, on the loss of his directing influence. The compositions Marcantonio was engaged in producing during the seven years commencing from 1520, are clearly distinguishable, upon careful comparison, from those which preceded them, and we see how essentially his manner in these later works became changed in its character.

An acquaintance had been formed by Marcantonio with

Raphael's pupil and assistant Giulio Romano, and they both were brought into companionship with Pietro Aretino, who, as a young man, left his trade of a bookbinder at Perugia, and, having made his way to Rome in search of employment, contrived to ingratiate himself with Raphael's wealthy patron, Agostino Chigi, in whose household he succeeded in obtaining an engagement. The intimacy thus created resulted in the publication, in 1524, of a volume of sonnets by Aretino, for which Giulio Romano designed a series of drawings, and Marcantonio engraved them. Their character was so extremely offensive, that determined measures were taken by the new Pontiff, Clement VII. (Giulio de' Medici), to suppress the book, and punish the authors of it. Giulio Romano made his escape to Mantua, and Aretino fled from the city, eventually taking up his abode in Venice. Less fortunate than his companions, Marcantonio was seized and consigned to prison. Every effort was made to destroy the obnoxious engravings, and, except the fragments of some few of the heads of the figures in the British Museum, no impressions of them are believed to be extant. The last known set was purchased of the late M. Waldeck, a dealer in and restorer of old prints at Paris, for a collector in England, on whose death in 1830 they were destroyed, with other similar curiosities, by his executors.

There is no more perfect specimen of Marcantonio's talent, not only as an engraver, but as an accomplished draughtsman, than his representation of Pietro Aretino. The animated portrait it presents to us loses none of its force of expression, from the studied exactness wherewith the minutest details are finished. A trial proof from the plate, before it was completed, is in the British Museum. Vasari writes of it (v., 414) : " He engraved also in Rome, from the life, Pietro Aretino, that famous poet, the portrait being the most beautiful of all that were executed by Marcantonio."

Through the intercession of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici,

and the painter Baccio Bandinelli, Marcantonio obtained his release from prison. An additional motive for the Pope's leniency was the desired completion of a large plate Marcantonio was engaged upon, with the representation, after a composition by Bandinelli, of the Martyrdom of S. Lawrence (B. xiv., 104). In the words of Vasari (v., 419), it was considered to be truly beautiful, and engraved with extraordinary care, although Bandinelli complained to the Pope that the engraver had committed many faults in it. The latter presented the print to the Pope, who pronounced "that it not only was free from errors, but that many committed by Bandinelli had been judiciously corrected by Marcantonio, proving that he was a greater master of engraving, than Bandinelli was of design. The Pope thereupon commended Marcantonio greatly, and was always ready to give him audience."

The prestige Marcantonio had maintained during Raphael's lifetime had departed, and the great painter's original compositions to work from, and his direction and support in their production, were no longer available, to aid him in regaining the position he had so seriously prejudiced. The demand, however, for his engravings, and their production, remained unabated, as we know from the long catalogue of them given by Bartsch, and of the engravings of Marcantonio's assistants and followers.

The years of Marcantonio's art career, twenty-two in number, are separable into four distinct periods. From our first acquaintance with him, in his print of Pyramus and Thisbe, dated in 1505, until towards the end of 1508, his skill, in the craft he was so diligently engaged in the acquisition of, was principally limited to the reproduction of studies and designs of figures, whilst working in the school at Bologna, a sharp pointed tool being used for their incision on the copper, in careful imitation of the delicate pencilling of the original drawings. The thin, dry manner of these early prints, in their monotony of tone and their

general treatment, significant of the youth of their author, are demonstrative of the employment, in chasing decorative plate, Marcantonio during his studentship was engaged in, for which Francia's workshops were so celebrated. There is an extensive series of prints, engraved by him in these days of his education, for the most part small in size and unimportant in their subject, illustrating the progressive command of the technicalities of his work he was steadily acquiring.

His skill as a draughtsman and as an engraver comes forth in rapid development during the five ensuing years, commencing with the Mars and Venus of December, 1508, succeeded by the portrait of the Bolognese poet (Philotheo) Achillini of 1509-10, followed by *Les Grimpeurs*, with its date of 1510, engraved at Rome, and the small group of the exquisite works of art he produced, in quick succession after his arrival in the imperial city, of which the Adam and Eve, the Lucretia, and the Poetry are the typical examples. It is during the five years of this second period that our highest estimate of Marcantonio as an accomplished artist has to be formed. The outline sketches of the compositions of Raphael were by the great painter's hand; but the detail of the design, with its refinement of finish and delicate intonation of the shadows, was of Marcantonio's workmanship, resulting in the finest drawings upon the copper the skill of the engraver has succeeded in producing.

The two important influences, widely different in their character, which at this time came into operation in their guidance of Marcantonio's style of engraving, were the interest taken by Raphael in his executive skill, and the different use the burin was applicable to, which Marcantonio acquired the knowledge of, whilst engaged in making his copies of the Albert Dürer woodcuts. The change which ensued, in the deeper tone of his engravings produced under Raphael's inspection, remained unaltered until Raphael's

death in 1520. Great fulness of colour, whilst retaining the bloom produced by the dry-point needle, is the striking characteristic of this the third period of Marcantonio's art career, and conspicuous amongst the examples of it, are the prints of the Judgment of Paris, the Murder of the Innocents, the Martyrdom of S. Felicita, and the mystical composition of the Dream. The numerous beautiful representations of the Holy Family and of the incidents of Our Saviour's Passion, are all from Raphael's designs, whose critical supervision is evident in the artistic finish of their execution. The Madonna standing in lamentation over the dead body of Our Saviour (*au bras nud*) is a prominent instance of the great painter's refinement of drawing, and of the skill wherewith the engraver preserved its pathos and expressiveness. Numerous prints, important in size and brilliant in colour, were in the course of publication under their joint co-operation up to the time of Raphael's death, one of the latest examples of them being the altarpiece of the Five Saints.¹

On the death of Raphael, a marked change ensued in the character of Marcantonio's engraving. The concluding period of his professional career, from 1520 to 1527, com-

¹ In Zanetti's "Calcographie" (p. 200) we have the following comment upon the genius of Marcantonio:—"The merit of mechanical execution would not have sufficed for Marcantonio's renown: it is founded principally upon the purity and grace of his outlines, in the happy choice of his subjects, and the beauty of drawing of the extremities of his figures; still more upon the correctness of expression and character of the heads. The faces of the women he drew, says Longhi, are always graceful without affectation, handsome without effeminacy; whilst those of the men, in their freedom from exaggeration, are manly in their development, and dignified, when the expression of dignity was needed, without defiance,—the one and the other equally sympathetic in expression, whatever were the age, the sex, or the circumstances. To the friendship and guidance of Raphael he was indebted for his highest title to renown, worthily responded to on his part, in his contributing, by the productions of his burin, to the dissemination in far distant countries of the fame of his master and friend."

prises the large prints engraved, in conjunction with Agostino Veneziano, to supply the demand which had arisen for the reproduction of the pictures and frescoes of Raphael, and the other painters of the time. There is frequent carelessness of execution, in the strong deep lines the plates are engraved with. The most artistic example of this, the fourth period, and at the same time the largest in size of Marcantonio's prints, is that of the Martyrdom of S. Lawrence, after Baccio Bandinelli, where again he had the advantage of the painter's superintendence. With exceptional instances of a return to the beautiful workmanship of his early days, of which the portrait of Aretino is a brilliant specimen, the consummate skill Marcantonio was the master of, as seen in the exercise of it during the second and the third period of his art career, was, in this final period of it, brought into subserviency to the profitable trade of the mechanical engraver, and continued until its close in 1527, no print by his hand attributable to a date later than that year being known.

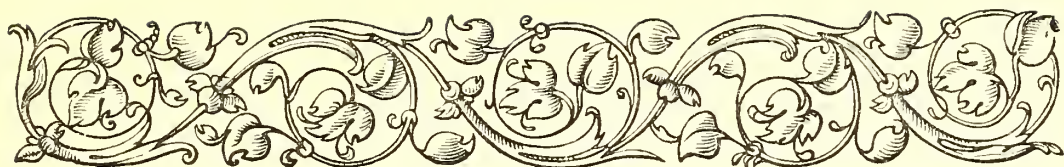
The terrible sack of Rome in 1527 dispersed the crowds of artists assembled in the imperial city; and Vasari states (v., 419): "Marcantonio became little less than a beggar, for besides losing all that he possessed, he was obliged to disburse a good ransom, to procure his liberation from the hands of the Spaniards. Having done this, he departed from Rome, and never returned to it: nor are there many works which can be authenticated as engraved by him, subsequent to the time we now speak of." At the end of his memoir Vasari adds (v., 442): "Not long after his departure from Rome he died in Bologna." Bartsch (xiv., ix.) concludes his brief notice of Marcantonio's career with an amplification of Vasari's words, that "the Spaniards having taken Rome by assault in 1527, Marcantonio lost all his property by the pillage, and was obliged to leave the city and return to Bologna, where apparently he lived in retirement until the end of his days."

Cav. Milanesi gives in a note (Vasari, v., 404) a quotation from the "Cortigiana" of Aretino, published in 1534, of a speech of Flamminio in the third act, beginning, "Ho trapassato le caterva de' pittori et degli scultori, &c. *Et non niego che Marcantonio non fosse unico nel burino,*" from which he infers that Marcantonio was dead at the date of the publication of the "Cortigiana." His death most probably occurred soon after the sack of Rome: the absence from the long list of his engravings, of any that can be considered attributable to the period subsequent to 1527, is confirmatory of the opinion that he did not long survive the calamity which fell upon the city.

The altered character of execution, adopted after Raphael's death, is illustrated by the prints of Marco da Ravenna and Agostino Veneziano, who were engaged with Marcantonio in supplying the demand that had arisen for transcripts of the painter's frescoes and pictures. Numerous skilled workmen, many of them eminent for their talent as draughtsmen and their technical ability of execution as engravers, had flocked to Rome, in search of employment under Marcantonio. The cunning, however, of the artist's hand passed away with the founder of the great school he had established, and, from the commencement of the second quarter of the sixteenth century, the delicate dry-point work of the Italian painter became superseded by the use of the burin of the engraver.

The process was resumed in the following century by the Dutch painters, as an adjunct to their work with the etching-needle. Some few of the later Italian masters, born before 1500, continued to pursue the method they in their youth had been educated in; but the skill of drawing upon the copper, which had been brought to such artistic excellence in Italy, virtually died out, on its abandonment for the mechanical process of engraving, introduced by Marcantonio Raimondi in the fabrication of his copies of the woodcuts of his German contemporary.





APPENDIX.

AGOSTINO VENEZIANO (DE MUSIS).



AGOSTINO VENEZIANO, in the second decade of the sixteenth century, became celebrated amongst the followers of Marcantonio Raimondi, through the employment he was extensively engaged in, under the master's direction, of producing the engravings that were published at Rome, after the works of Raphael Sanzio. The dates and inscriptions accompanying his signature, and the few circumstances of his career, narrated by Vasari, supply the materials from which is gathered the slight information we have, for nothing further has been ascertained, respecting him.

The inscription upon the print by Agostino Veneziano of *Les Squelettes*, after Baccio Bandinelli (B. xiv., 424), "AVGVSTINVS . VENETVS . DE . MUSIS . FACIEBAT . 1518 . A . V ." tells us he was a native of Venice, of the family "de' Musis", a corresponding inscription "AGVSTINO . DI . MUSI" being also upon one of the earliest of his works (B. xiv., 409), the second of his two copies of the *Old Shepherd* by Giulio Campagnola (B. xiii., 374, 7).

Agostino Veneziano's acquisition of his skill in engraving was evidently made from the study of the prints of Giulio Campagnola, many of which he copied previous to his leaving Venice towards the end of 1514; during the greater part of the year 1515 he was at Florence, occupied in engraving from the designs of Baccio Bandinelli. Several

specimens of the rare prints of his early workmanship are in the British Museum: they bear no mark or monogram by which they can be identified, but they are evidently by his hand. A Man with Two Flutes (B. xiv., 454), is a noticeable example, in its clear pencilling, of the dry-point manner of the Italian painters he had been trained in the practice of. On his subsequent arrival at Rome, Agostino Veneziano adopted a total alteration of style, in accordance with the bolder method of using the burin, then employed by Marcantonio in the work he was engaged upon.

From the date of two other copies, executed prior to his departure from Venice,—the one in 1514 (B. xiv., 25), from the woodcut of Our Saviour's Last Supper, in the series of His Passion by Albert Dürer (B. vii., 117, 5), and the other (B. xiv., 411), in the same year, from the Astrologer of Giulio Campagnola (B. xiii., 375, 8),—the birth of Agostino Veneziano took place, it is considered, about 1490: a clever fac-simile made by him (B. xiv., 458), of a third print of Giulio Campagnola of the Young Shepherd (B. xiii., 373, 6), although bearing no date, is likewise attributable to the year 1514. Further evidence of the work he was occupied with, whilst at Venice, is derived from another copy (B. xiv., 336), from the print of an offering of a child at a statue of Priapus, by the Venetian artist Jacobo de' Barbari (B. vii., 525, 19).

Bartsch, in the brief memoir prefixed to the fourteenth volume of his "*Peintre Graveur*," states that the most ancient of Agostino Veneziano's productions bears upon it the year 1509: he does not specify it in his catalogue, and was in error, most probably, in the statement, no print with such a date being known. Amongst the dates, nearly ninety in number, wherewith he marked his prints, the earliest are those we have named of 1514, ending with a series of portraits of 1536.

Agostino Veneziano's engravings, after the designs of Baccio Bandinelli, executed, as we learn from the mark

upon four of them, in 1515, apprise us he had then left Venice, and was resident in Florence.

The Medici were restored to power in 1512; amongst the artists in employment at Florence under their patronage, Bandinelli was in high repute, and his designs were the popular models the young artists in the city endeavoured to imitate. The story that Bandinelli destroyed Michelangelo's fresco of the Pisan soldiers in the Sala del Consiglio, during the tumults that ensued on the change of dynasty, is distinctly narrated by Vasari (vi., 137), but its authenticity is doubted.

Vasari informs us, in his *Life of Bandinelli*, that he obtained the reputation of a great designer; after detailing the circumstances of his intercourse with Andrea del Sarto, and the other artists assembled in Florence, and describing his works, Vasari proceeds to write of Bandinelli (vi., 140), that,—“continuing, therefore, his earnestness of study, he not only sent forth a large number of plates, designed in various modes by his own hand, but desirous of trying how far he could succeed, he further employed Agostino Veneziano the engraver, to engrave a naked Cleopatra (B. xiv., 193), and another larger plate, full of anatomical figures (B. xiv., 424), which was very highly praised.”

Agostino Veneziano, according to the account given by Vasari, in his *Life of Marcantonio Raimondi* (v. 420), “went to Florence with the intention of attaching himself to Andrea del Sarto, who, after Raphael, was considered one of the best painters in Italy. Persuaded by Agostino Veneziano to have his works engraved, Andrea made a design of a Dead Christ sustained by three angels: but as the execution was not equal to what Andrea desired it to be, he would not allow any more of his works to be engraved.” The print of the Dead Christ (B. xiv., 40) by Agostino Veneziano, as we see on its examination, is in his early manner, and feeble in its execution: the absence of any other engraving by him after Andrea del Sarto, is confirma-

tory of the dissatisfaction it created : from the 1516 added to the signature, we learn it was completed in that year, instead of on the occasion of the engraver's second visit to Florence in 1528, as implied in a subsequent remark of Vasari.

Before the end of 1515 Bandinelli left Florence : Leo X. when passing through the city in that year on his way to Bologna, became acquainted with Bandinelli, and sent him to Loreto, to aid in the completion of the church of the Madonna, then in course of construction.

The loss of the master's designs to work from, and the failure of the engagement with Andrea del Sarto, induced Agostino Veneziano to seek employment elsewhere : his engravings from the compositions of Raphael dated in 1516, apprise us he lost no time in proceeding to Rome, where the school founded by Marcantonio had become so eminent ; on his arrival his services were forthwith brought into requisition by Marcantonio, whose estimate of his ability is seen in the test he subjected it to, in submitting one of the most impressive of his prints (B. xiv., 37), of the Madonna and her attendants lamenting over the dead body of Our Saviour, to Agostino to copy.

The plate (B. xiv., 39), from the 1516 it is marked with, was completed before the end of the year ; the haste it was engraved in accounts for the inferiority of its workmanship to that of a second copy of the same print, signed but undated (B. xiv., 38), subsequently produced by Agostino, which is far more carefully finished, and more closely in correspondence with the original.

Vasari writes (v., 414) : "The fame of Marcantonio having widely extended, and his prints greatly increased in value and repute, many had flocked to him for instruction. Amongst those especially successful were Marco da Ravenna, who marked his prints with the signature of Raphael, 'R.S', and Agostino Veneziano, who signed his work 'A.V.' : these two engraved a considerable number

of the designs of Raphael." After describing several of the engravings, Vasari proceeds (416): "Agostino and Marco between them engraved nearly all the works which Raphael designed or painted, and published impressions of them, and other things which Giulio Romano had painted after his designs. And when, of the works of Raphael, scarcely any remained, which had not been reproduced by them, they then engraved the compositions painted by Giulio, in the Loggie from Raphael's designs." Vasari enumerates many of the subjects which were completed whilst Raphael was alive; adding, that "after Raphael's death Marco and Agostino separated, and Agostino was engaged by the Florentine sculptor Baccio Bandinelli, who employed him to engrave a study of anatomy (B. xiv., 424), from a design he had made of attenuated naked figures and skeletons,¹ and another plate, of a Cleopatra (B. xiv., 193), both being considered to be extremely clever. Encouraged by the success, Bandinelli designed and caused a large plate to be finished, larger than any which had yet been executed, full of draped women and naked men engaged in slaughtering, under Herod's command, the innocent children" (B. xiv., 21). The engraving of the Murder of the Innocents is more fully described in Vasari's life of Bandinelli (vi., 144), where it is stated to be the joint work of Marco da Ravenna and Agostino Veneziano: the work was solely that of Marco da Ravenna, whose monogram it is marked with.

One of the largest of Agostino Veneziano's prints, of Our Saviour bearing His Cross, engraved from a design by Raphael for his picture, known as the Spasimo di Sicilia, painted for the Convent of Santa Maria dello Spasimo at Palermo, which has since been removed to Madrid, was

¹ The date 1518 upon this print shows that it was engraved at a period earlier than these remarks of Vasari refer to. The print of Cleopatra is dated 1515, and was therefore likewise engraved at Florence before Agostino went to Rome.

published in the year succeeding that of the engraver's arrival in Rome (B. xiv., 28), the "A.V" with the date 1517 being on a stone in the lower left corner. It is the most important of his works, produced under Marcantonio's guidance and direction, to which we are indebted for the artistic excellence of the various prints executed by Agostino during the succeeding ten years of prosperity the city was left in the enjoyment of.

Agostino was saved from the fate which befell so many of his brother artists at the sack of Rome in 1527, and Vasari tells us (v., 420) he escaped to Florence. Passavant (vi., 50) considers that a portion of his time, before he returned to Rome, was passed at Mantua, from the engravings he made after the compositions of Giulio Romano; amongst that artist's frescoes, in the Palazzo del T., there was a group of Hercules overcoming the Nemæan Lion; the copy of it by Agostino Veneziano (B. xiv., 287) was made in 1528, that date being upon it.

The print of Our Saviour attended by three angels, after Andrea del Sarto, ascribed by Vasari to the year when Agostino Veneziano took refuge in Florence, was executed, as previously named, on his former visit to the city. He must have returned to Rome early in 1528, for we find he was there again in full employment, eighteen of his prints being dated in that year. Amongst them we have a series of nine subjects of architecture—of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders, illustrative of his association with the architect, Sebastian Serlio, to whom the restoration of the buildings of the city had been entrusted by the Pope.

The renewal by Clement VII. of his patronage of Baccio Bandinelli is brought to our attention by the large composition of the sculptor's *Accademia* (B. xiv., 418), inscribed "ACADEMIA . DI . BACCHIO . BRANDIN . IN . ROMA . IN . LVGO . DETTO . BELVEDERE . MDXXXL . A.V." The print is of much interest in its evidence, with the groups of students occupied in their various pursuits, of Bandi-

nelli's establishment in the city, and the influence he exercised upon the schools of art at the time. An important example of this later period of Agostino Veneziano's workmanship, is the large group of Mars and Venus surrounded by Amorini (B. xiv., 349). From the inscription upon the print, "RAPH . VRB . DVM . VIVERET . INVEN . A.V . 1530," we learn it was engraved after some drawing of Raphael, retaining but little of the spirit and refinement of the great master's manner. A small picture, by Giulio Romano, nearly identical with the print, is in the Louvre. Besides the representation of Bandinelli's Accademia, the prints of nine antique vases are likewise dated in 1531. During the three succeeding years we have five dates only to guide us, and, with the exception of a large map of Tunis (B. xiv., 421), and some terminal figures (B. xiv., 301-304), the last engravings by Agostino Veneziano, identified by the mark of 1536 upon them, consist of a series of portraits of celebrities of history.

Bartsch attributes to Agostino Veneziano (B. xiv., 400) a figure of an old man with a long beard, costumed in a full eastern robe, standing in a child's go-cart, an hour-glass being placed on the ledge of it in front: the design he considers is by Baccio Bandinelli. The engraving is bold and spirited in its cutting, but does not correspond with the manner of Agostino Veneziano. On a large scroll above is the inscription, "Anchora inparo," and in the margin at the foot "Tam diu discendum est, quam diu vivas bis pueri senes.—Ant. Salamanca excudebat MDXXXVIII." The prints dated in 1536 were apparently the last of the works of Agostino Veneziano, and he died, as is generally supposed, in that year, or shortly afterwards. Subsequent to his death, many of his plates passed into the hands of Antonio Salamanca, the publisher, whose large unsightly signature upon the last-named print, "ANT SALAMANCA EXCVDEBAT . MDXXXVIII", is one of the earliest intimations we have of the active trade that speedily was brought into operation in

Rome, in the sale of prints from the engravers' exhausted plates, which were utilized as a new industry by the dealers into whose hands they had fallen. The re-working they were subjected to, more than once repeated, and the coarse, harsh impressions consequently produced from them, were aggravated by the conspicuous position these added names of their publishers were placed in.

MARCO DA RAVENNA.

Marco da Ravenna was born, in the city he derives his name from, towards the end of the fifteenth century. His print, marked with the "R. S" monogram, engraved in 1519 after an antique sculptured frieze of children (B. xiv., 242) in the church of San Vitali in Ravenna, known as the Throne of Neptune, connects him with the town in that year, from the inscription upon the print "OPUS . HOC . ANTIQVVM . SCVLP . REPERITVR . RAVENNAE . IN . AED . DIVI . VITALIS . MDXVIII." Marco da Ravenna's citizenship is still further indicated by the signature "MRCVS . RAVENAS ." upon his engraving of the statue of Laocoon and his sons (B. xiv., 353). We have no other instance of a date upon his prints, to guide us as to the period of their production.

The account given by Vasari, in his *Life of Marcantonio Raimondi*, of Marco da Ravenna and Agostino Veneziano, has previously been quoted, in the memoir of the first of the two engravers (p. 454):—he tells us: "The fame of Marcantonio having widely extended, and his prints greatly increased in value and repute, many had flocked to him for instruction. Amongst those especially successful were Marco da Ravenna, who marked his prints with the signature of Raphael, 'R. S.', and Agostino Veneziano, who signed his work 'A. V.': they both engraved many of the designs of Raphael;" and Vasari adds (v., 420): "Marco da Ravenna, besides the works produced in association with

Agostino already enumerated, executed many others entirely with his own hand, known by the mark previously described, all of them being good and deserving of praise."

Amongst the signatures used by Marco da Ravenna, the monogram formed of the letters "R . S ." is of the most frequent occurrence. Although found upon several of his prints after Raphael and Giulio Romano, it is introduced also upon his engravings from the antique and other subjects: the far more probable reading of it is "Ravenna sculpsit."

Pierre Jean Mariette interpreted, in the first instance, the monogram "R . S ." to be that of Silvestre da Ravenna, an opinion he subsequently abandoned. In his "Abecedario" (Paris edition, 1851-1860, iv., 339), Mariette describes "the Murder of the Innocents, engraved by Silvestre da Ravenna after Baccio Bandinelli, the famous Florentine sculptor. There is not in this print the same grace, as in that after Raphael; neither the disposition, nor the expression, nor the arrangement of the draperies, approach it; but one sees great taste of design, sustained by a profound study of anatomy and management of the muscles. The execution of the engraving also is very inferior to that of Marcantonio: the print nevertheless is of considerable merit, and rare to find equal in quality to this (the print he writes his description from), which has not been retouched. We have to observe in passing, that there were two engravers of the same name, called Marco and Silvestre da Ravenna, which has seldom been noticed. Vasari speaks only of the first, and we cannot understand why connoisseurs were far more cognizant of the second, except from the fact that there are many prints with the mark 'R . S ' (in monogram) used by Silvestre da Ravenna, whilst it is only on one bearing the name of Marco. Their style of engraving is almost exactly the same, although, as a rule, we find greater firmness and skill in the prints executed by the engraver with the name of Marco. Vasari, in the Life of Baccio, states expressly

this piece was engraved by Marco da Ravenna. Lomazzo mentions the print in his *Treatise on Painting* (615) as having been engraved by Marco da Ravenna. Benvenuto Cellini, in his '*Trattato dell' Oreficeria*' (2), writing of Marco da Ravenna, says he was a goldsmith, as were nearly all the other skilled artists. Cellini makes a curious observation with respect to engraving,—that the exercise of it, in these early days, was almost from necessity by the goldsmiths. These are the words of Cellini: Antonio (Raimondi) of Bologna and Marco da Ravenna were, at the time, amongst those who were the competitors in engraving with Albert (Dürer), and acquired in it great reputation. Vasari refers only to Marco da Ravenna, and I am all but persuaded there was no engraver of the name of Silvestre da Ravenna. I am aware that connoisseurs usually attribute to Silvestre da Ravenna the prints bearing the 's . R' monogram, and I have never known them given to Marco da Ravenna. The mark, composed of an 's' and 'R', was originally no doubt the cause of this mistake. But, if connoisseurs find in it the first letters of the name of Silvestre da Ravenna, cannot they also find in it '*Ravenna sculpsit*'? This certainly deserves examination. Vasari expressly says, Marco da Ravenna marked his prints with an 'R . s', the same as Agostino Veneziano marked his with an 'A . v'."

The existence of Silvestre da Ravenna is extremely problematical, and the creation of the name seems to have originated in the attempted interpretation of the monogram of the letters "R . s."

About 1525, at the time when Marcantonio was engaged upon the largest of his plates of the Martyrdom of S. Lawrence, from a design of Baccio Bandinelli, the most important of Marco da Ravenna's engravings was likewise executed. The representation of suffering in relationship with Christian persecution, and the display of the nude figure in every variety of attitude, were then favourite subjects for the artists' pencils, and the works of Bandinelli

were in high favour at the Papal Court. Vasari tells us in his life of the painter (vi., 144), "he made the engravers Marco da Ravenna and Agostino Veneziano engrave a print, drawn by him on a large scale, of the slaughter of the innocent children, cruelly put to death by Herod: it was crowded with numerous nude figures, male and female, and children, alive and dead, and was noticeable for the varied attitudes of the women and soldiers, displaying the clever skill he had in delineating the figure, his knowledge of the action of the limbs, and the play of the muscles, occasioning his acquisition of great fame throughout Europe."

The print (B. xiv., 21) bears the inscription "baciuf florentinuf", the only other mark upon it being the "R . S." monogram: the engraving is distinctively in the style of Marco da Ravenna, the whole of it being of his workmanship. The motive was evidently the desire to emulate the print of the Murder of the Innocents (B. xiv., 18) by Marcantonio, after a drawing by Raphael, which had excited very general interest, from the skilfulness of its artistic execution. The engraver of Bandinelli's design devoted patient attention to it, and the trial proofs, of which there is an example in the British Museum, show how minute was the care he bestowed upon the work. The composition may have gratified the Pope's taste for such subjects, but the exaggerated treatment of the figures, and their disconnected crowding, present a striking contrast to the animated reality of the fine engraving it was produced in rivalry of.

The popularity of the display by Bandinelli of his skill in anatomical drawing, is seen in another contemporary print by Marco da Ravenna, of a group of nude figures and skeletons, named "Les Squelettes" (B. xiv., 425): the print illustrates the demand for engravings of the works of Bandinelli, which had been created, Agostino Veneziano having already finished a similar group (B. xiv., 424) from a different design of the master.

Alessandro Zanetti, in the notice of Marco da Ravenna,

in his “*Premier Siècle de la Calcographie*,” Venice, 1837, cites the remarks of the different writers who have discussed the controverted question, respecting Silvestre and Marco de Ravenna. He quotes also from the “*Enciclopedia*” of Pietro Zani, the discovery by the Abbé amongst the MSS. of the family Hercolani at Bologna, of a forgotten pamphlet, wherein mention is made of the family name of Marco da Ravenna, and of the period of his death. The pamphlet comprises a funeral oration of Vincenzo Carrari, pronounced in honour of Luca Longhi, painter of Ravenna, who died in 1580, wherein the author accuses his countryman Vasari of neglect, in omitting to give the names of his fellow-citizens, who distinguished themselves in the arts. The following is a translation of the passage in Zani :¹ “ Of the existence of this clever engraver there cannot be the slightest doubt, for on his print of the Laocoon is to be read ‘ Marcus Ravenas.’ But we owe the discovery of his being of the family Dente, and that he met with his death in the year 1527, wherein occurred the famous sack of Rome, to Vincenzo Carrari, who, in the oration delivered by him on the death of the painter Luca Longhi, in blaming Vasari,—wrongly, however, as regards Marco,—because in his lives of the painters he gave no account of certain citizens of Ravenna, thus expresses himself, ‘ And he leaves unnoticed Marco Dente da Ravenna, an engraver of marvellous and indeed singular excellence, as we learn from his prints, of the Innocents, and of Paris, after Raffaello of Urbino, in which he exhibits such refinement and beauty, that to our day no one has been found who approaches, much less equals him : he was killed, greatly to the loss of the art of engraving, in the last sack of Rome.’ ”

To the preceding extracts Zani adds the notice from “*Hist: Ravennat: Libri Decem*” by Girolamo de Rossi,

¹ Dell’ esistenza di questo bravissimo incisore non può nascerne il minimo dubbio per la stampa del Laocoonte da lui lavorata, in cui si legge

Venice, 1592 : “ Quamobrem dum, Roma capta ab Hispanis, in quo tumultu trucidatus est Marcus Dentes Ravennas, qui singulari arte figuras in aere incidebat, ut, praeter innumera alia, Paridis et Innocentium Raphaelis urbinatis picturae declarant.” The passage is quoted by Passavant (vi., 67), with the remark, that as Girolamo de Rossi was contemporary, and lived on terms of intimacy with Vincenzo Carrari,¹ a celebrated lawyer of the time, who was born in 1529, they evidently derived from the same source their information respecting Marco da Ravenna, since they both fell into the like error of attributing to him the engraving of the Murder of the Innocents after Raphael.

A careful examination of the subjects of the prints of Marco da Ravenna enables us to arrive at a probable estimate of the period of their production. The single instance of the signature of his name in full is, as before mentioned, upon his representation of the then recently discovered group of the Laocoon, in its original state, prior to the restoration of the missing limbs. Two of Marco da Ravenna's most important prints after Raphael, of Our Saviour's Last Supper, and of Helen carried away by the Trojans, both of them copied from Marcantonio's engravings, are marked with the single letter “. R .”, the

Marcus Ravenas ; ma ch' egli fosse della famiglia Dente, e che incontrasse la morte nell' anno 1527, in cui successe il famoso sacco di Roma se ne deve la scoperta a Vincenzo Carrari, il quale scrittore nell' orazione da lui recitata in morte del cel pittore Luca Longhi, lagnandosi del Vasari,—ma però a torto in quanto a Marco,—come nelle vite de' suoi pittore non abbia fatti conoscere alcuni Ravennati, così si exprime : Et lascia nella penna Marco Dente da Ravenna, intagliatore di maravigliosa, anzi unica eccellenza, come si può conoscere per la carta degl' Innocenti, e del Paride di Raffaello di Urbino ; il quale coi suoi intagli aggiunse di modo vaghezza et bellezza, che finqui non si è trovato alcuno, che di gran lunga se lo avvicini, non che lo pareggi, et fu ammazzato con gran perdita di quest' arte nel sacro (deve dir sacco) ultimo di Roma.

¹ Pietro Paul Ginanni, in his memoirs of the writers of Ravenna (Faenza, 1796), says that the oration of Carrari, entitled *Della utilità della morte* was published at Ravenna in 1581 by Francesco Tebaldini.

same mark being used upon his print (B. xiv., 327) of Venus leaving Juno and Ceres, from the fresco in the Farnesina, painted by Raphael about 1518, in the series of the story of Cupid and Psyche; and likewise upon that of *Les Squelettes* (B. xiv., 425), from the second drawing by Bandinelli of the subject. The only other signature, far more frequently made use of, is of the monogram of the letters "s. r." The series of Our Saviour and his twelve Apostles (B. xiv., 79-91) bear this "s. r." monogram: they are copied from the figures previously engraved by Marcantonio, but with much originality of drawing, the faces being varied in expression, and they are amongst the most characteristic examples of Marco da Ravenna's manner. For some time after his arrival in the imperial city, Marco da Ravenna was occupied in reproducing the designs of Raphael, either from the original drawings, or from the repetition of them in Marcantonio's engravings. Marco da Ravenna's later works, with the exception of those he executed whilst in the employment of Baccio Bandinelli, are for the most part limited to the compositions of Giulio Romano, confirming the opinion that he continued to reside in Rome, where he was killed in the tumult, on the sack of the city in 1527.





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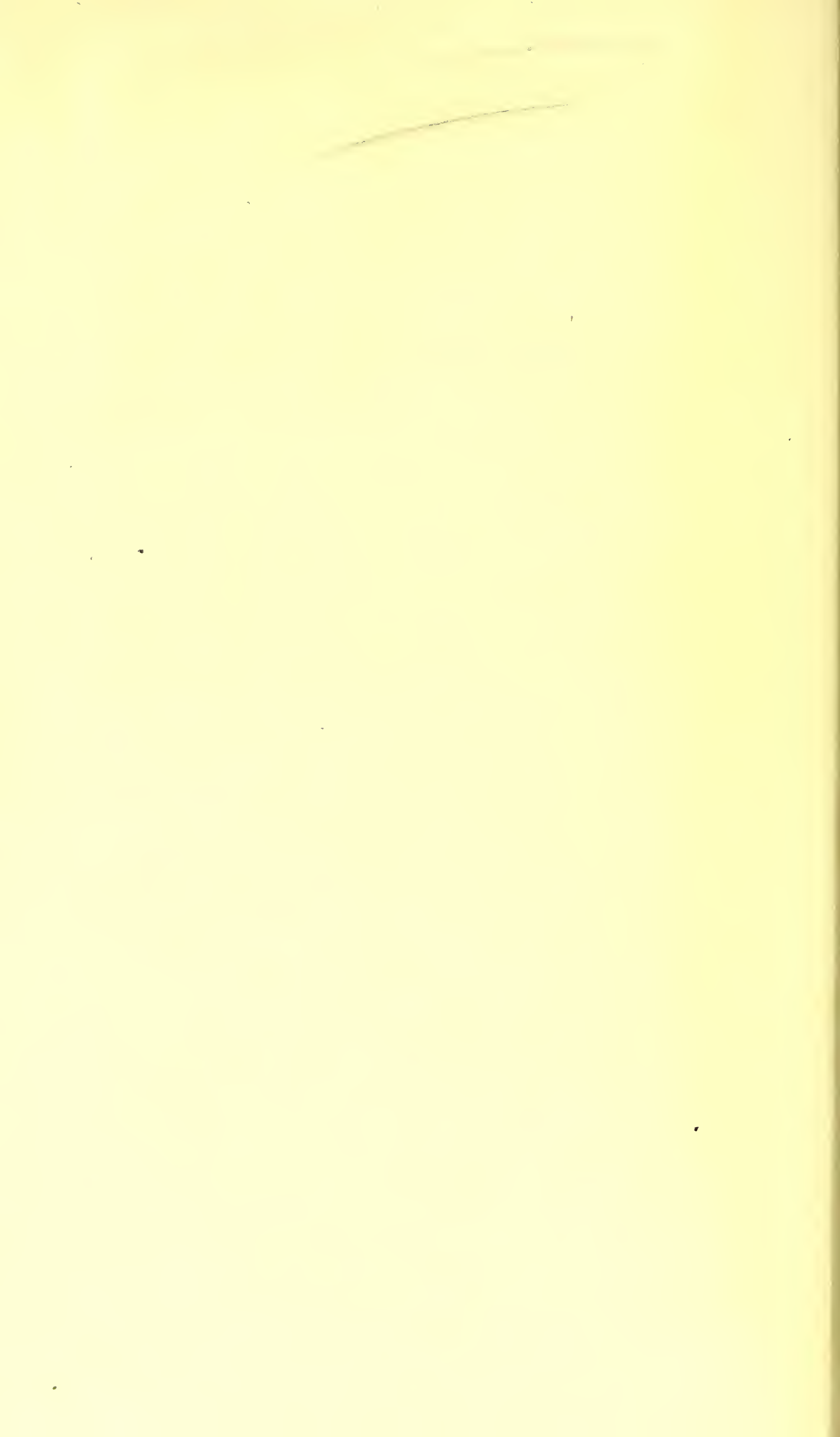
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